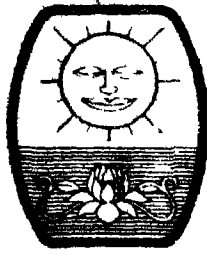


Vidyajyoti

JOURNAL OF THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION



विद्यज्योति

Religion and World Peace
Christian and Secular Ethics
Hosea on Bhakti
Liturgical Adaptation in India

JANUARY 1980

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Editorial

Unity in diversity was the theme of the Pope's address when, at the end of last June, he received a delegation sent to Rome by Pope Shenouda III, Coptic Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria. "From the very first days of my election as Bishop of Rome", the Pope said, "I have considered as one of my principal tasks that of striving to bring about the unity of all those who bear the holy name of Christian. The scandal of division must be resolutely overcome, so that we may fulfil in the life of our Churches and in our service to the world the prayer of the Lord of the Church, 'that all may be one' . . . Fundamental to (the ecumenical) dialogue is the recognition that the richness of this unity in faith and spiritual life has to be expressed in diversity of forms. Unity — whether on the universal level or on the local level — does not mean uniformity or absorption of one group by another. If true unity is to be achieved, it will be the result of cooperation among pastors at the local level, of collaboration at all levels of the life of our Churches, so that our people may grow in understanding each other, in trust and love of each other. With each trying not to dominate but to serve others, all together will grow into that perfection of unity for which our Lord prayed. . .".

As this editorial is being written, Pope John Paul II is on his way to Istanbul where, continuing the "dialogue of love" between Paul VI and Athenagoras I, he will confer with the ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I of Constantinople. The visit links up with that of Paul VI to the Phanar in July 1967. Twelve years have elapsed since. The encounter between the successors, in West and East, of two great pioneers of unity, has special significance at this time when the long awaited official dialogue between Rome and Orthodoxy is due to start soon. It may be anticipated that the new visit of Peter to his brother Andrew, in the person of their successors, will give new impulse to the dialogue and be a landmark on the road to unity. We shall comment on the event later. Meanwhile, in the address mentioned above, Pope John Paul gave clear indications as to how the road must be travelled. Seldom has the principle of unity in diversity been so

clearly formulated. More importantly still, perhaps, the Pope stressed the part which cooperation between pastors at the local level ought to play in furtherance of the ecumenical movement. He called for "collaboration at all levels of the life of our Churches". We ought to be convinced that the one united Church of Jesus Christ will not come about without this collaboration.

* * *

As we enter into a new year — and a new decade — we keep before our eyes this twofold vision of the local and the universal Church. We shall continue to inform our readers of important events affecting her life at both levels. Whether on matters of ecumenism or inter-religious dialogue, of doctrine or praxis, of spirituality or pastoral action, we remain committed to contributing to the renewal of the Church in prolongation of the Second Vatican Council. We renew to our readers our invitation to share in our pages their pastoral reflections and experiences.

The Editor should inform his readers of changes on the Editorial Board. Fr John K. Thoonunkalparambil, new Dean of the Theological Faculty of Vidyajyoti Institute, is by reason of his office Chairman of the Editorial Board of VIDYAJYOTI Journal. Having recently taken up a United Nations Assignment in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Mr P. T. Kuriakose has been forced to resign his membership of our Editorial Board. We thank him for the services rendered to us during the last six years.

A "Supplement" to VIDYAJYOTI, November 1979, has informed our readers of the increase in the subscription rate which soaring paper and printing costs have forced our publisher to impose. We trust that they will agree that what the review offers them, both in quality and quantity, is well worth the relatively low cost, and we thank them for their continued patronage. We further invite them to help the review to broaden its readership through Gift Subscriptions and the sending of Sample Copies for which the same "Supplement" made provision. Their cooperation in this matter will be much appreciated.

One More Sign of Hope

THIRD WORLD CONFERENCE ON RELIGION AND PEACE

Albert NAMBIAPARAMBIL, C.M.I.

WHEN I was ordained a pastor, I was told by the ordaining minister: When you begin to tell the truth, get your bag packed and be prepared to go." Of all the statements heard at the Third Assembly of the World Conference on Religion and Peace, this one made by the former Ambassador of the United States to the U.N., Andrew Young, remains most fresh in my mind as this report is being written. Andrew Young had to resign his post as a result of his speaking the whole truth, however painful. Now he was addressing the 350 participants of WCRP III, representing ten major religions of the world, who had come from almost fifty different countries to Princeton, U.S.A. The meeting took place at the Theological Seminary there, from August 28 to September 7, 1979. Did this impressive gathering of religionists succeed in speaking the whole truth on the theme of the conference, "Religion in the Struggle for World Community"?

A Pilgrimage to the Felt-Need of the Other

This confluence of the religions of the world happened for the first time in 1970 in Kyoto, Japan. It happened again in Louvain, Belgium, in 1974. The driving force for it had come mostly from India, Japan and the United States of America. The movement is now ten years old, and has seen the creation of different national and regional chapters and of units in different countries — not a small achievement if we consider how difficult it is to get the religionists of different tradition to come together around the same table to share their 'religious' concerns. The need we have of one another, felt religiously, at the root of our own existence, is the 'raison d'être' for WCRP.

"We need you", was repeatedly heard from high ranking men in the political world, as they addressed the participants: Jimmy Carter, President of the United States and Kurt Waldheim, the General Secretary of the U.N. Their messages amounted to a clear avowal that,

left alone, they have no answers to the problems of man and look up to the religious world in their search for solutions to the problems of a conflict-ridden society. This was dramatically brought home when, during the visit to the United Nations, a Hindu delegate put this question to Senator McGovern: "Why do the super-powers spend so much money on arms for the Third World countries and leave their people in poverty and misery"? The reply was: "Had I known the answer, I would have been a wiser man." But is the world of religions itself prepared to speak the whole truth on such issues? Are not some at least of the problems of the man of today creations of the religions, resulting perhaps from certain religious tenets? Would then the Princeton 'satsang' of religious men and women be prepared to speak out without reticence?

Open the Inner Eye

Can the world of religions, so badly divided, give an answer? Or can religionists join hands in the quest for an answer, different from that of the politicians? In his Key-Note Address, Archbishop Angelo Fernandes, President of WCRP (and reconducted at Princeton for the third time), suggested that the participants open the 'third eye', or the 'inner eye', to see the 'visibilia' as springing from the 'invisibilia'. Speaking of religion's role as a comprehensive integrating force he said:

It enables man to feel at home in the wide universe, in society, and in history. It produces in man strong, penetrating, and persisting moods and motivations. . . .

We know to think but badly need to become masters of the thinking process, to "order thoughts around", i.e., to direct attention at will, the first and most difficult step in "inner work" especially for people of an activist milieu. . . . We live in a humanity of appearances, whereas "life is a drama of the visible and the invisible". . . .

We do not realize that we are in a world of invisible people. Bringing the visible and the invisible into the realm of our vision is the function of the inner eye. . . . It is one of religion's urgent tasks to bring home to the men of today that objectivity in human affairs can only be achieved through the ability to see the "invisibilia" and work towards changing the inner core of man. . . . There is no gainsaying that "inner work" is part of the answer to the search for meaning and purpose even as it is a sure way to inner peace and harmony.

The presidential address touched on the "idolatry of wealth" that dominates our society, on its concept of *growth* that creates needs, even artificial ones: "This is a form of idolatry of wealth and it inevitably breeds poverty". Will the religious world, which at times is a partner to this idolatry, find the way to true liberation from this slavery,

all helping each other to focus on the inner world? The Princeton Assembly did some soul-searching. But did it lead the participants to open the 'third eye' and see the 'visibilia' as springing from the 'invisibilia'? Yes and No, is the answer. To substantiate it, let us turn to the Declaration which was passed in the last General Session and became part of the Prayer Service with which WCRP III came to a close.

"We Cannot Deny"

Perhaps the clearest sign of the opening of the inner eye is found in the often repeated phrase "We cannot deny", which became an expression of repentance and confession:

We cannot deny that:

the practices of our religious communities are sometimes a divisive force in the world;

too often we conform to the powers of the world;

we have not done enough as servants and advocates of suffering and exploited human beings; and

we have done too little to build inter-religious understanding and community among ourselves on the local level where prejudices run strong.

Another sign of the same opening is the deep trust proposed by the Declaration:

We trust that:

the power of active love, uniting men and women in the search for righteousness, will liberate the world from all injustice, hatred, and wrong;

common suffering may be the means of making us realize that we are brothers and sisters, called to overcome the sources of that suffering;

all religions will increasingly cooperate in creating a responsible world community.

These and similar expressions of repentance and trust show that WCRP is slowly emerging as a unitive force of mankind.

Another strong plea made by the session was for Nuclear and Conventional Disarmament. The "No to any kind of war between nations or peoples" for which the Assembly pleaded was much inspired by the passionate appeal for complete disarmament made by Doctor Homer Jack, WCRP Secretary General, in his Report.

But passages drawn from the Declaration should not give one the impression that all was positive in the workshop sessions which took the giant share of the time of this third assembly. Nor should one think that the Declaration reflects all that went on in the workshop sessions, especially where signs of 'conversion'—through repentance

1. The "Princeton Declaration" is published in this issue of VIDYAJYOTI in the Documentation section. (Ed.)

— to the inner world are concerned. Little repentance was expressed there. Rather, we often heard the delegates from different religions speaking to the tune of "everything is fine in my house". In the workshop where this writer was involved, we heard the delegates from China, from Russia and from another country, telling us of the 'freedom for all religions' that reigns in their country and of the perfect harmony between the various religions that exists there. One exception to this monotone was a voice from Poland who painted the picture of a religious community struggling for freedom.

Wait and See

Though the existence of WCRP is justified by the fact that for the last ten years it has acted as a unitive bond between religions, thus providing us with a ray of hope, this unitive power must not be exaggerated. True, religion in depth has unitive force. But, it is extremely difficult for an assembly of this kind to drive deep into the depths. Other factors intervene which recommend an attitude of "wait and see"; by which is not meant watching from outside, but getting involved in the activities of the Conference and expecting results from them.

One factor calling for a sobering note is that in its mode of functioning WCRP is not and cannot be a "Mini U.N.". True, it has an observer status at the United Nations. But the dream that it could itself be converted into a parallel organization seems utopian or an illusion.

Another truth, that is often forgotten, is that WCRP has still a long way to go if it is to become a unitive force at the level of the ordinary masses. True, it has a few regional and national chapters, and some units within the national chapters. There are, for instance, about twenty units in India. But most of them have still to undertake some project or to perform some symbolic action, which will be the expression of the unitive force of the religious traditions at grass-roots level. Resounding Declarations at world level are useless unless they become action and shared experience in local units, leading in the very process to the formation of new units.

There is the constant danger of another idolatry, to which Dr Dana McLean Greeley, an honorary co-chairman of WCRP referred during the opening meeting of the assembly. He spoke of:

the selfish religious institutionalism — what I call even religious idolatry and chauvinism — that I see so prevalent in so many quarters in the contemporary scene If we think that national idolatry is bad — and I certainly do — is not religious idolatry even worse? We must put aside the worship of ourselves and false gods, or of our own institutions, and seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness.

But can the different religions liberate themselves from the various forms of idolatry in which they are caught? WCRP III showed this to be a very difficult task. There is no denying the fact that a political game was being played in the midst of religious proceedings.

Politics and Religion

Much has been made of the participation, for the first time in the history of WCRP, of a Chinese delegation made up of eight members representing Islam, Buddhism and Christianity. They were very active and eloquent in the workshop sessions and in the general assembly. Their presence, along with that of the Russians, aroused much interest. We could see the two groups lining up, in defence of different political interests, when they proposed amendments to the draft of the Declaration, for instance on disarmament, nuclear tests or transnational corporations. On the one hand, the presence of representatives of different religions from Russia and China is a hopeful sign that 'religion' is again becoming a real concern in those countries. It added to the representative character of WCRP and raised its credibility for the cause of peace. On the other hand, the danger became evident that the religious forum of WCRP may be used as another forum for the political game. How to avoid this danger? It may be difficult to separate religious concerns from political ones — especially in those countries.

Another game was played by the Muslim and Jewish delegates. They used the platform which Princeton offered to explain their claims, divergent and mutually opposed as these were. Words politically loaded were exchanged. Yet a positive note was struck by the fact that they could do this in a very friendly atmosphere, and later find themselves united in prayer and meditation. A true sign that love is the unitive force was given when, as the delegates were on their way to the White House to meet the President of the United States, a Jewish Rabbi prayed for peace from a Mosque in Washington. Perhaps this and similar events are lived expressions of the 'we-need-you' call, made by politicians and religious people alike.

In the Grip of Concrete Issues

The discussions went smoothly enough as long as they remained in the realm of generalities. Difficulties, however, cropped up when concrete problems and situations were raised. Attempts were made to focus the attention on the situation of the oppressed peoples, the plight of refugees, of blacks, of minorities, etc. Some of the participants wanted explicit mention to be made of this or that country as agent of oppression. This was challenged by others with another

version of the same situation. The only option left open was to be satisfied with a general affirmation of human rights.

In the seminar group on human rights, the issue was raised of the religious roots of exploitation, of the causes of oppression of man by man, of the denial of human rights caused by certain religious tenets. These attempts were futile because of stiff opposition from the members of the religion that was being questioned. It appears to be very difficult for the followers of one religion to admit before others that such and such practice of their tradition does less than justice to human dignity. Moreover, a forum like this one does not seem to offer the congenial atmosphere for self-examination and purification. This may have to be attempted in dialogue experiments conducted at local and regional levels.

Another item which brought division in the same seminar group on human rights was the question of the rights of the unborn child, and the moral issue of abortion which it raises. But on this issue division set in among the Christian participants themselves. The draft Statement included an assertion that 'life is sacred'. But as the group took up the question whether abortion can in any situation be justified, the Christian denominations were divided. In the end an evasive formulation was proposed to the effect that the very fact that this issue is raised testifies to the sickness of our society. Our common task is to cure the disease as and when its symptoms become manifest.

Back to the Source and Thence

Most participants, if not all, shared the opinion that the richest moments in all the proceedings were the moments of prayer. Every day the session began with a prayer meeting. Different religions took turns in offering to the participants an occasion to share in their particular form of prayer. This had already been done at Kyoto and Louvain. But, because of the request made by a few participants, this time two sessions of joint meditation were added. Swami Chidananda of Rishikesh led the first meditation, taking for his theme the prayer of St Francis of Assisi. The second common meditation was led by a Christian participant, who made use of one of R. Tagore's poems in his *Gitanjali*, "He comes, comes, ever comes", and of his prayer for freedom. The best expression of the assembly's 'return to the centre' was when, at the end of the session, the participants marched in procession to the Presbyterian Church, where they offered on the altar the Declaration they had just approved. An atmosphere of peace and joy pervaded this ceremony. We were returning to the unitive centre to go forth from there as messengers of peace to our various lands. That members of ten major religions of the world, with often

conflicting political interests, could arrive at such a symbolic expression of unity as was expressed through the lighting of candles from the same light, and the offering of flowers in the same vase on the same altar, is indeed significant. 'Peace', which is the central concern of WCRP, was exchanged among the participants, each one giving the peace in his own way. The emergence of symbolic gestures, expressive of what WCRP stands for, is a sign of hope. Such symbols should be an inspiration for joint action for peace.

Follow Up ?

"We believe that peace is possible", affirms the Declaration. The success or failure of WCRP will depend on how far this belief is brought to bear on the concrete situations where religions meet. Will there be a follow-up to the confession made at Princeton that the "names of our various religions have been used in warfare and community strife, and that we must work harder against this"? And who will follow this up ? This question brings out what perhaps is the main weakness of WCRP. The participants of WCRP III were mostly individual persons with no official capacity to represent their particular religious tradition. True, most of them are associated with a local WCRP unit. But they are there too as individuals, not as official delegates of any group. To bring the official leaders of the various religions together into a world parliament of religions seems unthinkable. Moreover, in many countries WCRP has still to strike roots. There were very few participants from the South American and African nations. It takes time for an organization like this to find its way to all the countries of the world. Meanwhile, it would seem, priority should be given to the setting up of new units in those countries where WCRP is already in existence. Joint action for peace on the part of the various traditions in those countries will be the most effective way of helping the movement to spread.

Conclusion

In the conflict situations of our contemporary world it is indeed difficult to bring all the religions of the world together for the cause of peace and justice. Yet there is no other option for religionists to follow. Participation in the problems of the world and of men, out of a religious conviction, must become the common endeavour of the various religious traditions — if only we believe that the source is one. The Princeton Declaration states that "as religious people we have a special responsibility for building a peaceful world community and a special contribution to make". If this conviction is translated into common prayer and action, there is every reason for all of us to be hopeful. But this we also need for our survival.

Christian and Secular Ethics

G. LOBO, S.J.

The Problem

Is there a real difference between the morality of a Christian, of a Hindu and of an atheist? Is there such a thing as a specifically Christian ethics? Can one be truly moral without religious faith? These are some of the questions agitating the minds of many today.

Traditionally, morality has been closely linked up with religious faith. In fact, in most religious traditions the moral code has been attributed to divine revelation and right moral conduct has been understood as conforming to the divine will. But such a view is being more and more questioned today, and this both from the theoretical and practical standpoint. More and more, morality is being understood as the development of the human personality. There does not seem to be any need for a sanction other than the voice of one's autonomous conscience or, as Kant already put it, the 'categorical imperative' of one's own reason.

Besides, when one looks at society, there is no denying that many who do not profess any religious faith or adhere to any religious group apparently live a very high moral life by any externally definable standard. They manifest an outstanding degree of generosity and personal integrity. On the other hand, many who are religious betray pettiness and narrow-mindedness. The record of religious people in the fight for social justice does not seem to be very high. Some would even go to the extent of saying that religion itself fosters alienation and prejudice and hence is an obstacle to morality.

Natural Morality

Morality is the perfection of MAN AS MAN, the development of the most specific qualities of man. Man is moral when he is fully human, when he lives according to the deepest exigencies of his being. This implies an integrated personality, proper adjustment to society and constant striving for the betterment of humanity.

In fact, the Church itself stresses the importance of the 'natural law, flowing from the demands of human nature and discerned by the

light of human reason. The Magisterium of the Church, during the past hundred years, has been increasingly using the natural law in its exposition of social, medical and sexual ethics. The great encyclicals of Pope John XXIII are a magnificent charter of human rights based on the natural law.

Vatican II has again emphasized the importance of the natural law. It refers to the binding force of the natural law when it speaks of war and peace and the question of family planning. In the context of the opposition to the natural law in certain circles due to an excessively mechanistic understanding, the Council presents a decidedly personalistic view of the natural law which is based on the nature of the human person and his acts.¹

The Reformers had rejected the idea of the natural law because of their view that sin had so infected human nature that it could no longer serve as source of ethical knowledge. So all ethical knowledge was to be sought in the revealed Word of God and those matters not immediately determined therein were to be left to the discretion of civic authority. But the incredible horrors of the Nazi regime in Germany produced a shock and to an extent brought home the need for human ethical reflection by whatever name it is called.

In recent years, especially in America, Protestants are ready to recognize the existence of a common ground for morality which Christians share with others. They would admit the basic goodness of creation as a source of moral wisdom, provided its imperfection is admitted.²

The idea of natural law is clearly based on the Bible, although we may not find any systematic exposition of it. Most of the ethical teaching of the Old Testament is derived from the ancient wisdom of the peoples bordering Israel, although it has been assumed into the perspective of the Yahwist faith and the bond of the Covenant. This is true especially of the Decalogue which represents the principal demands of God on his covenanted people. The Wisdom literature is drawn from the instruction of sages on life and conduct, although it is given a new religious purpose by the sacred writers.

Christ brought a radical newness to man. But this does not mean that the purpose of God for man has altered. The God of redemption in Christ is the same God who created everything in and for Christ. With reference to clean and unclean foods (Mk 7, 14-23), Jesus hints at the

1. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 51.

2. For an Anglican statement of ethics prescinding from Church and Scripture, see N. H. G. ROBINSON, *Groundwork of Christian Ethics*, London, Collins, 1971, p. 16.

distinction between Jewish ritual regulations which do not bind in the New Covenant and the permanent law written in the very heart of man and continuing to retain its validity. In condemning divorce, Jesus appeals to the established order of creation. "For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so" (Mt 19, 8). The very nature of man rightly understood points to the ideal of permanent monogamy.

Paul's exposition of sin and redemption presupposes a law known from the reality of creation by virtue of human reason. "When Gentiles who have not the law (of Moses) do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts" (Rom 2, 14-15). The distinction between good and evil is founded in the nature of things. The law of God is imprinted in the heart of man by the very fact of creation.

Vatican II emphasizes the value of secular human activity since man, created in God's image has received a mandate to subject to himself the earth and all that it contains, and to relate himself and the totality of things to the Lord, the Creator of all. Earthly affairs have a rightful autonomy. This, the Council insists, is not merely required by modern man, but harmonizes also with the will of the Creator. For by the very fact of their being created, "all things are endowed with their own stability, truth, goodness, proper laws, and order."³ The Council, therefore, deplores "certain habits of mind, sometimes found among Christians, which do not sufficiently attend to the rightful independence of science".⁴

Hence a '*secularisation*' rightly understood is a tribute to the Creator and the mandate he has given to man in the temporal sphere. It is to be carefully distinguished from '*secularism*' or the false doctrine according to which earthly realities do not at all depend upon God. This conception, instead of ennobling man and creation, rather takes away the very basis for their dignity which consists in their relation to God, the origin and end of all reality.

The Bible itself manifests a process of '*desacralisation*', for instance, regarding marriage and sexuality. While in the pagan religions around Israel, the divine was dispersed among a host of gods who could form couples and thus something like sexual experience was projected on to the divine sphere, the Old Testament insists on the created or secular nature of marriage and sexuality. Thereby the idea of God is purified and sexuality itself receives its true dignity as a gracious gift of God.

3. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 36.

4. *Ibid.*

Hence human or secular ethics has its own validity. Still, attempts to live only according to a closed humanistic ideal will in the long run be a failure as is proved by wars, social upheavels and the decline of public morality in the world in recent years. So the horizontal dimension of human life cannot stand long without its vertical reference to God. There is need for a morality centred on God, the ground of all being.

Christian Ethics

The prophets of the Old Testament had already purified the moral heritage of Israel and through it of humanity in general. However, the Christ event has brought in totally new elements into human experience, especially the revelation of the Trinity and the Christian vocation to live a Trinitarian life. Thereby personalism and the communitarian destination of man receive a new dimension. The person of Christ, the eternal Word of God made man, becomes the dynamic exemplar of the perfect moral life. The intelligence of man has been opened to a new vision of moral and religious values. Love has received its central place as the well-spring of all virtues.

The Christian experience facilitates a deeper understanding of natural morality, since the theological virtues of faith commitment, eschatological hope and Christ-like love reveal the full dimensions of the moral vocation of man. Human reason can now be tested by the unfailing light of the Gospel.

Love of neighbour, care of the needy and the like are as such not specifically Christian. Even the intentionality of implicit reference to an Absolute in doing good is common to everyone. Still, the Christian relates himself to God in the Spirit of Christ and this explicitly. This gives a new intensity and universality to love of neighbour. The special presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church contributes in a unique way to arriving at certain moral knowledge, though its content may be human. The sacramental and ecclesial communion are powerful means in achieving perfection. The element of renunciation finds a profound meaning in the Christian perspective.

What is specific to Christian ethics is the scripturally inspired understanding of man and the world that the Christian brings to concrete issues and that affect his solution of these problems. Still, it is not so much the content of moral knowledge that is derived from specifically Christian sources. The teaching and example of Christ

5. Cf. Gerard R. HUYGHES, "A Christian Basis for Ethics", *Heythrop Journal* 1972, pp. 27-47.

provide rather a *stimulus*, a *context* and a *motivation*.⁶ These, however, will have to be personalized.

The distinction between Christian morality and non-Christian morality is, in a way, of limited validity. Phenomenology of religions has discovered a common conception of religion as that of the Holy advancing toward man and man turning toward the Holy. It is true that only the Christian revelation manifests the truest nature of this "Holy" and the manner of its advance toward man. But the call to perfection in Christ is addressed to all mankind without distinction since man, according to God's salvific plan, is simply man called in Christ. Mankind knows and accepts the divine call in different degrees of explicitation and intensity. Still, non-Christians concretely share more than the 'natural' elements of the Christian vocation, since Christ died for all and his Spirit is now working in all. Even professed atheists, who in all sincerity seek the truth, may encounter God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in their inmost consciousness moved by the hidden workings of the Holy Spirit.

Hence all genuine ethics is Christian in a universally applicable sense in as much as all things have been created and redeemed in Christ and now the Spirit of the risen Lord dwells in the hearts of all, moving them to do what is right. Besides, for the Christian, ethics must be wholly Christian because he is called to absolute obedience to Jesus as Lord.⁶

Karl Rahner's theory of 'anonymous Christianity' casts some light on the matter⁷. Since God's universally salvific will in Christ is a universally experienced orientation toward God, this may not necessarily add much to the ethical self-understanding that is new or foreign to man in the concrete order. Still, the ethical implications of the sacramental life and of explicit adherence to Christ in the ecclesial community should not be minimized. On the other hand, Christians should not hesitate to accept the possibility that some non-Christians might have developed some deeper moral insights than they have. If natural morality is knowable through human reason, there is no reason why some non-Christians may not at times have a clearer vision in some areas, the strengthening grace of the Holy Spirit being available also to them. Besides, today if the precept of universal brotherhood is

6. James M. GUSTAFSON, *Can Ethics Be Christian?*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1975, p. 170.

7. Cf. Karl RAHNER, "The Order of Redemption within the Order of Creation", in *The Christian Commitment*, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1963, pp. 47-52; "Anonymous Christians", in *Theological Investigations*, Vol. VI, Baltimore, Helicon, 1969, pp. 390-98. The expression 'anonymous Christians' may not appear complimentary to non-Christians; but this is a way a Christian might see the situation of the non-Christian within the perspective of his faith commitment.

accepted, at least in principle, by all, the Christian must see in it the fulfilment of the aspirations of every man as well as a victory of the Gospel that has acted as leaven all these centuries.

St Thomas explicitly declares that Jesus Christ has not given any new moral norms in specific areas beyond those dictated by human reason⁸. So, basically, there is the same problem for the Christian and the non-Christian to discern what is or is not a human value. The Christian must also be careful not to attribute to his faith and thus absolutize what may only be a passing and imperfect formulation of human morality.

In studying the relationship between human and Christian morality, we can start with that which is human and hence not inaccessible to human reason, and then reflect on the specifically Christian dimension which determines the life of a Christian. This is a valid approach, although some Christians may find such an analysis too abstract and wish to concentrate on their faith experience and live a life of total self-surrender to God in Christ. Whatever is truly human would supposedly be included in this self-surrender.

However, such a Christian must recognize that human life has got its concrete demands, especially in the complex world of today. If he fails to use the God-given gift of human reason to make a proper analysis of the existential situation and reflect on the demands made by his very humanity, he may easily be misled by the subtly corrupting atmosphere of racism, militarism and a conservative oppressive society which do not fail to exploit the religious sentiments of the unwary pious man. Crusades of the past and events in South Africa and Latin America today are sufficient evidence of this danger. Besides, the problem of dialogue with non-Christians regarding the promotion of human values and human rights will remain.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, while insisting that the point of departure for Christian ethics is the reality of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, also points out that the reality of God discloses itself only while setting one entirely in the reality of the world; and, when one encounters the reality of the world, it is always already sustained, accepted and reconciled in the reality of God.⁹ It should then be noted that Christian morality is essentially human morality, in the best sense of the word. The moral conduct of the Christian must basically be human. The Christian must beware of any inhuman attitude in the name of the defence of religion.

8. Cf. *Summa Theologica*, Ia, IIae, 108, 2.

9. *Ethics*, New York, Macmillan, 1964, p. 61.

While religion is man's worshipping response to God who speaks his Word of love, true religious morality is man's response to God's word mediated through the created world which is created and recreated in Jesus Christ.

Vatican II, therefore, exhorts Christians "to strive to discharge their earthly duties conscientiously and in response to the Gospel spirit. They are mistaken, who, knowing that we have here no abiding city, think that they therefore can shirk their earthly responsibilities".¹⁰ Hence there is no room for evasion from earthly commitments under the pretext of practising a higher Christian 'spirituality'.

Morality of the Atheist

The religious orientation of openness to the Absolute is an essential dimension of human nature. Hence, even though an atheist may call himself a 'humanist', an important element will be lacking in his moral conception, at least at the conscious level.

Still, what is human in Christian morality is not closed to him. He could discover it to the extent that he has a basic openness to truth. Absence of any religious bigotry or pharisaical self-justification may perhaps lead him to clearer moral insights in certain areas, unless his atheism itself makes him fanatical.

Transcendental intentionality towards God the Father may not be absent in the depths of his conscience. This follows from the universal call to salvation in Christ. At the same time, we must note that the unbelieving sinner objectively offends not only against the order of human morality, but also against the love of the Father — this again in his innermost heart, where he is conscious of himself and not only of his act, though he may not attain to a reflex consciousness of God's personal call in Christ.¹¹

As the so-called 'humanist' does not realize or admit the significance of Christ for salvation, the sacraments and the ecclesial communion, as well as the realities of the Cross and the Resurrection do not have an explicit relevance in his moral life, and to that extent his moral life will be impoverished. Ignoring the situation brought about by the Fall, the unbeliever may not be sufficiently aware of the influence of egoism upon the grasp of moral values.

Whatever the divergence in explicit positions, a dialogue is possible between the believer and the unbeliever for mutual benefit. Today

10. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 43.

11. Cf. Josef FUCHS, *Human Values and Christian Morality*, Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1970, p. 120.

there is urgent need for cooperation in the search for human values. The believer should admit that, inasmuch as the humanist conceives and practises fraternal love as a non-egoistic gift of self to the neighbour for whose personal dignity and freedom he has a genuine respect, he may experience in interpersonal relationships a genuine sense of the Absolute. In fact many humanists today regard the proper relationship to the neighbour as in a real sense an absolute duty.¹² The Christian must admit from his own premises that the deeper one's understanding of loving, the nearer one is to the mystery we call God.

Moreover, we should note that atheism does not always arise from the perversity of the person concerned. As Vatican II has clearly pointed out, believers themselves may have to bear responsibility for the situation of widespread unbelief in the world. To the extent that Christians are deficient in their faith and give a counter-witness, especially in the line of social justice, they may be obscuring the authentic face of God and religion.¹³ Atheism is often a reaction against the abuse of religion on the part of the pious to further their selfish interests. This can be remedied only by the believers being more attuned to social justice.

A Note on Moral Instruction for Non-Christians

Objectively, all men are in the same order of salvation accomplished in Christ. He died for all and now his salvific influence extends to all, even to those who do not know him or who have not made a commitment to him by explicit faith, baptism and membership in the Church. Hence it would be wrong to speak of a 'natural' morality for non-Christians and a 'super-natural' morality for Christians. All in varying degrees are in the order of grace and are called to live the sonship of the Father and the brotherhood among men.

But pedagogically, it will generally not be possible to provide an explicitly Christian basis for moral instruction to non-Christians. To talk, for example, of 'life in Christ' may be objectionable, and even meaningless to them. However, this does not mean that we should take refuge merely in rational ethics. We could try to convey, as far as possible, a Christian view of man and his relationship with God.

The concept of God presented to non-Christian students should not represent an abstract or ethereal being bereft of any vital consequence for life. Neither should he be conceived in the image of man, as a sort of mechanistic distributor of rewards and punishments, or as one who is at the beck and call of man for his selfish purposes. We

12. Cf. *ibidi*, p. 135.

13. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 19.

should present him as the living God who cares for and invites all to communion with him.

There are many elements in non-Christian religions that provide true glimpses of God, e.g., absolute transcendence in *Advaita*, love and mercy in the *Bhaktas*. These could be utilized without yielding to cheap syncretism. The point is to discern the action of God in the lives and traditions of our non-Christian students, to help them in clarifying their religious and moral insights and to guide them to order their lives in accordance with these insights.

Fortunately, the idea of the Fatherhood of God is now attractive to most people, though it is not often grasped in its true depth. The Fatherhood of God implies that we act as befits his children and hence live in a spirit of brotherhood.

The doctrine of grace as sharing in the life of God is very important. There is every reason to think that non-Christians are not bereft of this divine gift. It seems to be a well-founded view that a non-Christian, when he turns to God in a fundamental option, is 'justified' and receives the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. This view does not take away anything from the uniqueness of Christianity and the special significance of baptism and membership in the Church. The doctrine of grace immediately leads to that of divine love which is communicated to us. Love which is the 'form' or 'soul' of all other virtues is primarily directed toward God but is to be expressed in love of neighbour.

While we should inculcate a God-centred morality, we should start from the concrete problems of the youth and the 'signs of the times'. The students should be made to feel that the subject is relevant to their situation. The great political, social and economic movements of our time should be analysed. The significance of the passionate striving after human freedom and justice should be examined in depth. The basic value of human dignity will be uncovered behind the obscure gropings and struggles of the younger generation today. Then the question of the true basis of human dignity will inevitably be posed, leading to the idea of God and our relationship to him.

Conclusion

Thus we can see that Christian morality and human secular morality are not opposed. Christian morality is not a superstructure to natural morality but is the transformation of human values and natural ethical principles. Without striving after human values, the Christian will be unfaithful to the will of God the Creator, who in Christ has not

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Hosea the Prophet of Jñān Bhakti

Sr VANDANA, R.S.C.J.

IN the Himalayan pilgrim-centre of Badrinath, millions of our Hindu brothers pay homage to the Lord, known here as Badrivishāl or Badrinārāyan. The Lord here is not the usual Shiva, but Vishnu in meditation, and the devotees ask of him a particular grace, “bhakti”, but a special kind of “bhakti”, viz. “jñān-bhakti” or the loving devotion that comes from or leads to the knowledge of God.

In the Bible the prophet Hosea may be called the prophet of jñān-bhakti, and just as the Hindu pilgrims reach the high place of Badrinath by passing through Haridwār (the gate of God), so the followers of Yahweh are invited to pass through the gateway of Hope (*āshādwār*): “I am going to...make the valley of Achor a gateway of hope” (2, 17).¹ Hope — because, though like Amos Hosea was a prophet of doom, for him “the day of Yahweh” was not a day of pitch darkness. His message was an “optimism of grace”, since Israel’s hope was grounded solely in the constancy of Yahweh’s love for his people. Just as the pilgrim, on reaching Haridwār, begins to be filled with new hope as he spots the foothills of the Himalayas beckoning him on high to visit the holy places, so too Yahweh leads on the Israelite to the “wilderness”: “I am going to lure her and lead her out into the wilderness and speak to her heart” (2, 16). Hosea, like Amos before him (Amos 5, 25), thinks of Israel’s journey through the desert as a time of spiritual idyll.

It is in the wilderness that Yahweh makes Israel see the *root-cause of her troubles*: “My people perish from *want of knowledge*. As you have rejected knowledge, so do I reject you...” (4, 6). And again: “There is no fidelity, no tenderness, no knowledge of God in the country, only perjury and lies, slaughter, theft, adultery and violence...” (4, 2-3). It is in the wilderness too that Yahweh teaches Israel the first of the four prerequisites of *Brahma Vidya*, according to Shan-karāchārya. This great saint-philosopher of India of the 8th century taught that knowledge of God, which is the goal of man, can only be had through *Vivek* — discernment — between what is Real and what

1. Achor is one of the gorges near Jericho leading to the uplands of the interior. The name means ‘misfortune’. See *Jerusalem Bible*, note to 2, 17.

is non-real, between what is permanent or immortal and what is temporary or mortal. It is due to lack of this fundamental prerequisite that Ephraim is an oppressor, trampling on justice, "so set is he on his pursuit of nothingness". Israel is not able to discern aright between ~~no-thing~~ and that which IS. In the wilderness she will learn what brings her true happiness. She will learn the distinction between her false lovers who are-not and her true Lover who IS: "A workman made this thing. This cannot be God" (8, 6). It is through lack of discernment and *avidyā* that she "plays the whore" (2, 7): "I am going to court my lovers", she said, 'who give me my bread and water, my wool, my flax, my oil and my drink'. She would not acknowledge, not she, that I was the one who was giving her the corn, the wine, the oil. . ." (2, 7-10).

And how is Yahweh going to teach Israel to discern aright and chose him alone as her lover? By the only way God can be known and seized. "By love he may be caught and held, by thinking never", *The Cloud of Unknowing* so aptly says. "Not by the intellect may Brahman be known, not by much learning can the Atman be reached", the Upanishads too constantly remind us. Purely intellectual disciplines are always going to be inadequate for a real understanding of God or his word. "The man of God is not made by books", says the Sufi Rumi. Hosea, no more than the Upanishads, seeks to impart conceptual knowledge. Biblical as well as Upanishadic knowledge is intuitive knowledge, or knowledge of the heart. "Know and venerate THAT as 'Tadvanam' (that delight)", ends the Kena Upanishad.

"I will betroth you to myself for ever, betroth you. . .with tenderness and love" (2, 21), Yahweh says to Israel. It is the first time that relation with God is expressed in terms of marriage. The sacred marriage concept was known to antiquity (mythological dramas in the fertility religions, ritual prostitution). Hosea's use of it is a daring interpretation of Israel's faith, and completely new. Marriage as he used it was not referring to the cycles of nature but to the historical event of God's covenant with his people. The meaning of this marriage was disclosed to him, not by reflecting on the union of a god and goddess but by a deep reflection on his own relationship with Gomer, his unfaithful wife.² The real historical tragedy, according to Hosea, was that just as Gomer played the harlot, so Israel had broken the covenant; all Israel's contemporary troubles were a symptom of this: "A prostituting spirit leads them astray, they renounce their God to play the whore" (4, 12). But Yahweh's tender faithful love, luring her into the wilderness of her loneliness and self-knowledge, pursues and cajoles her: "For many

2. See B. ANDERSON, *The Living World of the Old Testament*, London 1967, pp. 245ff.

days you must keep yourself quietly for me, not playing the whore or offering yourself to others, and I will do the same for you" (3, 3). His fidelity in love teaches her what true love means. Only when she is enthralled and thoroughly seized by his love, will she be able to let go of all other loves. And this is the only possible way of practising detachment.

Vairāgya is the second prerequisite of *Brahma-Vidyā*. John Donne wrote in one of his lovely sonnets:

Except you enthrall me, I never shall be free
Nor even chaste, except you ravish me.

It is only when one is ravished by God that one is inspired to "make the detachment" of lesser loves. Only in this understanding and acceptance of this love can the vow of celibacy make any sense. When the vow is made without hearing and understanding God's call—"I will betroth you to myself with faithfulness, and you will come to know Yahweh" (2, 22)—one is exposed to "wandering off with whores" (4, 14). "Though they go in search of Yahweh with their sheep and oxen, they do not find him; for he has withdrawn from them. They have proved unfaithful to Yahweh" (5, 6-7). Then Yahweh "abandon his people" and says: "I am going to return to my dwelling place, until they confess their guilt and seek my face; they will search for me in their misery" (5, 15).

And often Israel's repentance — our repentance — is short-lived and shallow: "Let us set ourselves to know Yahweh; that he will come is as certain as the dawn; his judgment will rise like the light, he will come to us as showers come, like spring rains watering the earth" (6, 3a, 5b, 3b). But Yahweh who knows "what is in man" answers: "What am I to do with you, Ephraim? . . . This love of yours is like a morning cloud, like the dew that quickly disappears" (6, 4). Then he teaches the secret of his love — so unlike fickle, ungrateful man's. Hosea's key sentence³ may be called the verse of *jñān-bhakti*: "For I desire *steadfast love* (bhakti), not sacrifice, knowledge of God (*Brahma-Vidyā* or *jñān*), rather than burnt offerings" (6, 6). Not that Hosea was opposed to worship — but rather to forms of it devoid of faithful love.

Hosea taught what Jesus was to make the essence of his teaching: the Spirit is what matters. "It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh has nothing to offer" (Jn 6, 63). Love is the pith, the essence. Hosea seems to have foreseen the spirit of Jesus' message. He condemned Israel's society as Jesus was to criticise it. His condemnation reached far beyond social immorality, political confusion or religious formalism

3. To which Jesus twice refers his hearers in Mt 9, 13 and 12, 7.

He was concerned with men's motives — the devotion of the heart, *bhakti*⁴ — with the things in which men place their trust. Like Amos, he attacked injustice and violence, but was more insistent on the evils of apostasy. Like other prophets he saw in the monarchy a symptom of the spirit of harlotry which led the Israelites to a false, idolatrous religion. Religion, he thought, was not necessarily a good thing; it could be a way of betraying God, a manifestation of sin. The priests and the prophets — as in all ages —, “feeding on the sin of Yahweh’s people” (4, 7-10), actually contributed to Israel’s harlotry, often in the name of religion.

And all this, because Israel lacked the steadfastness, and trustworthiness of a true covenant love — *Hesed*. English lacks a proper translation of this word. It is a loyal love — not motivated by mere legal obligations — that binds two parties together; an inner loyalty with firmness and constancy. Such love is true knowledge of God. In Hosea *Hesed* and Knowledge of Yahweh go together (2, 21-22; 4, 2; 6, 6). This is what is meant by *Bhakti-jñān*.

The Jerusalem Bible commentary explains that the primary meaning of *Hesed* is that of a bond. In human relationships, it comes to mean friendship, union loyalty. Used of God, it means his faithfulness in love to his covenant, and the kindness and forgiveness he always shows his chosen people. The devotion to the Sacred is also prefigured in *Hesed* — the unfailing, eternal love of God-made-man for man, no matter how often man fails in his love towards God. Used by Hosea in the context of married love, the word assumes and from then on will retain a still warmer significance: it means the tender love God has for his people (cf. Ps 136; Jer 31, 13, etc.) and the benefits deriving from it (Ex 20, 6; Dt 5, 10; 28, 22, 51; Jer 32, 18; Ps 18, 50).

But this divine *Hesed* calls for a corresponding *hesed* in man (6, 6), consisting of self-giving, loving trust, abandonment, deep affection, ‘piety’, a love which is a joyful submission to God’s will — which is his love. Knowledge of God comes only through this heart-surrender. God makes himself known through the benefits his Heart confers on us: similarly man “knows” God — with that heart-knowledge (*hridaya-vidya*) — when he returns love for love and expresses gratitude by always choosing God first. In this “choosing” God lies man’s wisdom.⁵ In choosing God’s love before other loves lies his *Vivek* (discernment) and *vairāga* (detachment). *Sham-dam-ādi* (control, endurance, discipline,

4. Cf. Mt 5, 8. The Gita too has several references to love as the only pure motivation in man.

5. In Wisdom literature, knowledge and wisdom are practically synonymous. They are both *jñān*.

etc.), and, above all, the last of Shankara's prerequisites for *Brahma-Vidya*, viz., *mumukshutva* — a burning desire for God — are also implicit. Hosea shows God's love as the model. His is a salvific love which longs to redeem man — from man; a love which finds itself baffled and disappointed at man's utter lack of understanding: "I wanted to redeem them, but they tell lies about me" (7, 13). For ever he draws them back to his love, ever patient and enduring.⁶ It is never too late to listen to his invitation: "It is time to go seeking Yahweh until he comes to rain salvation on you" (10, 12). *Mumukshutva* would be to long for this rain in the dryness of our hearts. In this response of love or *bhakti* man finds true *jñān*. Love-knowledge is the message of Hosea — and of the Bible — as *Tadvanam* and *Anandam* are of the Upanishads. Bliss is God. God is love. To know this love is to be redeemed. "This is eternal life that they may know Thee. . ." (Jn 17, 3).

6. In chapter 11 where Yahweh's love for Israel is depicted not as love for a bride but for a child, God's fatherly love and its rejection by Israel are depicted in vivid human terms (11, 3-4). God wants to punish Israel for her infidelity and ingratitude, but his love is too strong and deep (11, 9). The *Jerusalem Bible* commentary explains: "Yahweh's reflections about Israel's unresponsiveness give way to an impassioned proclamation to Israel of his love . . . , the love that ultimately governs all history." "How could I give you up?" (11, 8). Punishment is not Yahweh's last word; he cannot destroy his people. God's total otherness, instead of producing awe and terror, explains his mercy. He invites us to "return" and to desire ardently to be redeemed, liberated. He evokes in us *mumukshutva*.

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destroyed but fulfilled the aspirations of man. At the same time, without an explicitly religious and Christian reference human morality would be greatly impoverished. There would, then, be no deep or secure basis for genuine love which is the well-spring of all moral action.

Documents

Third World Conference on Religion and Peace

THE PRINCETON DECLARATION

Preamble

The Third Assembly of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP III), meeting at Princeton in 1979, is the continuation of an important heritage. The first WCRP at Kyoto in 1970, and the second at Louvain in 1974, revealed on the international level a basic unity of purpose and goal amid diversities of religious belief, and widened the pathway of inter-religious cooperation for peace. In spite of the scars of religious strife in some parts of the world, we perceive with joy a growing ferment of mutual understanding and respect among the followers of the great religions. We learned in the first two assemblies of WCRP that, while maintaining our commitment to our respective faiths and traditions, who may respect and understand the devotion of others to their faiths and religious practices.

We pledge ourselves to continue to grow in our mutual understanding and our work for peace, justice and human dignity. The Assembly is aware that we are approaching not only the turn of the century, but also a turning point in human history, with the survival of world civilization at stake. Therefore, we chose as our theme: Religion in the Struggle for World Community.

We rejoice in the sign of world community which this Conference represents in gathering 338 participants of Buddhist, Christian, Confucianist, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Shinto, Sikh, Zoroastrian and other religions from 47 countries around this common theme. We know that forces which negate human dignity are strong and all around us. We see the menace of deadly nuclear weapons and desperate national insecurity. Technological and economic power often exploits and excludes the poor of the world. Political power often represses dissidents and denies human rights. Human greed also destroys the natural environment on which we all depend. We realize that our religious insights and actions are only one contribution to the struggle against these forces. We therefore met with humility but with urgency to face, with the resources of our traditions and beliefs, the danger before us and the world.

Peace is Possible: Our Conviction

World community, built on love, freedom, justice and truth, is another name for peace. It is the goal of all our striving. It is not

a utopian dream. Despite the temptation to despair as competition for dwindling resources grows more fierce, as centres of economic power intensify their exploitation, and as stockpiles of nuclear weapons grow, we have come together in a spirit of hope. In our various religions, we know that we are members of one human family. Sustained and motivated by the spiritual power by which we all live, we believe that there is an alternative to violence. *We believe that peace is possible.*

This is the hope we would share, not only among ourselves, as followers of our various religions, but with the whole world. We dedicate ourselves to the task of becoming more effective agents of building community. We call upon believers and all human beings to share this hope and to join in a commitment to work for its realization.

We believe that as religious people we have a special responsibility for building a peaceful world community and a special contribution to make.

On the one hand, we realize that far too often the names of our various religions have been used in warfare and community strife, and that we must work harder against this. *We cannot deny that:*

- the practices of our religious communities are sometimes a divisive force in the world;
- too often we conform to the powers of the world even when they do wrong rather than confronting those powers with the word of the teachings of our religions;
- we have not done enough as servants and advocates of suffering and exploited human beings; and
- we have done too little to build inter-religious understanding and community among ourselves on the local level where prejudices run strong.

On the other hand, we have been brought to a new awareness in this assembly of the deep resources we share for making peace, not only among ourselves, but in the world.

Adhering to different religions, we may differ in our objects of faith and worship. Nevertheless, in the way we practice our faith, we all confess that the God or the truth in which we believe transcends the powers and divisions of this world. We are not masters, but servants and witnesses, always being changed and disciplined in worship, meditation, and practice by the truth which we confess.

We all acknowledge restraint and self-discipline in a community of giving and forgiving love as basic to human life and the form of true blessedness.

We are all commanded by our faiths to seek justice in the world in a community of free and equal persons. In this search, conscience is given to every person as a moral guide to the ways of truth among us all.

We believe that peace in world community is not only possible, but is the way of life for human beings on earth, as we learn it in our prayers or meditation and by our faiths.

These convictions we share. Therefore we can go further and share a common confidence about the fruits of religious witness in the world. *We trust that:*

- the power of active love, uniting men and women in the search for righteousness, will liberate the world from all injustice, hatred and wrong;
- common suffering may be the means of making us realize that we are brothers and sisters, called to overcome the sources of that suffering;
- modern civilization may someday be changed so that neighbourly goodwill and helpful partnership may be fostered; and
- all religions will increasingly cooperate in creating a responsible world community.

In this confidence, we turn to particular areas where peace and world community are at stake.

Mobilization for Peace: Our Struggle

A. A Just International Economic Order

It is an affront to our conscience that 800 million people in the developing world still live in poverty, that hundreds of millions more are destitute because physically unable to work, and that 40 percent of the world's population cannot read or write. The gap of economic disparity between the developed and the developing countries has widened during the current decade. In view of the stress laid by all the great religions on social and economic justice and the right of all men and women to have a share in the earth's bounty, we call on religious people throughout the world to work for a just and equitable economic order where dignity and humanity in harmony with nature will not be denied to any person.

Such a new international economic order of growing justice and equity would stimulate all nations to achieve viable and self-reliant national economies, capable of participating in international trade on a basis of equality rather than dependence. In order to establish this new vision, there must be the political and social will to promote balanced economic growth worldwide and to allocate its benefits to the abolition of poverty, the meeting of all basic human needs, and the creation of equitable trade relations between the industrial and the developing countries. We call upon religious people to work for the elimination of the structures of economic and social injustice in their respective countries and mobilize governmental and public opinion in favour of anti-poverty programs. We call on religious institutions with economic resources at their command to work for social amelioration, prevention of destitution, and succour of the poor.

Our sense of religious responsibility impels us to reaffirm that social justice and democratic participation in decision making are essential to true development. We are of the view that suitable measures should be taken at the national and international levels to ensure that the transnational corporations and enterprises of all economic systems do not wield undue economic, political, and social power in the host country.

All the wealth of the universe is a common heritage held in trusteeship for all. We advocate the rights of yet-to-be-born generations to planetary resources that have been wisely developed rather than wastefully exhausted.

B. Nuclear and Conventional Disarmament

We believe that a major concern for the human family on earth today is the looming danger of nuclear annihilation, either by design or accident. We acknowledge that in spite of SALT I and II, nuclear arsenals are continuing to grow, imparting a sense of urgency to the need for a world-wide movement to outlaw war and all weapons of mass destruction.

We regard the SALT II treaty between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. as an encouraging development for nuclear disarmament and hope that it will be ratified so that SALT III negotiations may soon begin. It is the duty of organized religion to oppose the proliferation of nuclear weaponry, the arms competition between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., and the expansion of the conventional arms race throughout the world. Nuclear powers must not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against nuclear or non-nuclear states.

A global moral and religious campaign which will say NO to ANY KIND OF WAR BETWEEN NATIONS OR PEOPLES is our call to governments, religious groups, and all men and women of conscience and faith. This movement must work towards disarmament and non-violent means of maintaining security. As a prerequisite, it is essential to create an atmosphere of trust and foster a spirit of conciliation between peoples.

In pursuance of these objectives, we propose that the following steps be immediately taken:

- a cessation of all testing, research, manufacture, spread, and deployment of nuclear weapons and other instruments of mass destruction;
- a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty;
- effective methods of verification to ensure the implementation of these measures; and
- a United Nations convention against the use of all weapons of mass destruction, declaring that such use is a crime against humanity.

In order to reduce reliance on arms, we propose that the mechanisms of international security through the United Nations be streng-

thened, that all nations implement unconditionally all the resolutions of the Security Council, and that the present concept of balance of power be replaced by a system of collective security in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

We express our profound concern over the massive increase in military spending, which has rocketed to £ 400 billion a year. It seems a cruel irony that while millions sleep with hungry stomachs, nations and their governments devote a great part of their resources to armaments, ignoring the demands of social justice. We therefore appeal to the members and leaders of our respective communities to use every political and moral influence to urge a substantial reduction in the current military expenditures of their own nations and the utilization of the funds thus saved for development around the world.

C. Human Rights

We reaffirm our commitment, made at Kyoto and Louvain, to the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, and we deplore the denial of human rights to any individual or community. We pledge our support to all societies, organizations and groups sincerely struggling for human rights and opposing their violation. We condemn religious discrimination in any form, and urge the United Nations to adopt a Declaration and Covenant for the Elimination of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. We uphold the right of citizens to conscientious objection to military service. We urge religious bodies to press their governments to ratify and enforce all the U.N. declarations, conventions and covenants for the protection and promotion of human rights. All the religions to which we owe allegiance enjoin us to protect the weak against the strong, to side with the oppressed against the oppressor, and to respect human life, freedom of conscience and expression, and the dignity of all people. We support the U.N. declaration and convention against racism and racial discrimination and urge all governments to adhere to them. The actions of the United Nations against apartheid should be implemented by all States, organizations and individuals.

Noting that WCRP III coincides with the United Nations-sponsored International Year of the Child, we reaffirm our belief in the United Nations General Assembly's 1959 declaration that humanity "owes the child the best it has to give" and that the child shall be brought up "in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood". We appeal to religious people throughout the world to help promote and work for the adoption of social, economic, and population policies in every country so as to assure a better and a brighter future for every child. It is profoundly important that youth should be actively involved in the movement of religion for peace, and inter-religious gatherings of youth should be encouraged.

We affirm that all human beings are born free and for freedom and equal in dignity and rights, and that any discrimination on grounds of sex is incompatible with human dignity. We are convinced that

practices, prejudices, or laws that prevent the full participation of women along with men in the political, social, economic, cultural and religious life of their countries are morally indefensible and should be eliminated.

D. Environment and Energy Crisis

The earth is threatened increasingly by human misuse of the environment in quest of material prosperity. We are endangering future generations by our depletion of non-renewable natural resources, our pollution of air and water with chemical and radioactive wastes, and our over-exploitation of the soil in many parts of the world. An energy crisis stares us in the face. With diminishing supplies of oil, nations and individuals will have to make sacrifices, develop alternative — if possible renewable — sources of energy, and even change their life-styles. The resources of all our religions are needed to cultivate respect for the natural world in which we live, conservation of its resources, and a style of human life that is in harmony with all of nature*. The children of the earth must conserve our planet's limited resources so that the bounty of the earth may not be wasted.

E. Education for Peace

The world's religious bodies must undertake major educational programs to increase mutual appreciation of all peoples and cultures, and foster a commitment to the values of peace. Our efforts so far have not been sufficient. We therefore rededicate ourselves to the education of children, youth, and adults, to the training of our religious leaders, and to promote the values of peace and understanding in our conduct in personal and public life.

Ultimately, peace and justice move toward the salvation of wholeness of all humanity, and flow from them as well. We, as followers of great religions, should be the channels through which spiritual power can flow for the healing of the world. We confess that we have not been worthy of this high calling, but we pledge ourselves here anew to be its faithful servants and witnesses. World peace in world community, with justice for all, is possible. We believe that the faith and hope which brought us together in this Assembly have been nurtured and strengthened during our time together. If this faith and hope were to be shared in the same way through the whole life of the religions to which we belong, then, at last, a new force would be brought to bear on human affairs and a new era would begin in the world. We shall pray, or meditate, and work that this new era may be realized.

A Report on Liturgical Renewal

At the CBCI General Assembly Meeting, held in Ranchi last October, the Standing Committee presented to the entire body of the

*The Assembly took note of the views of some of the participants that there should be no continuation of the development of nuclear power.

Indian Bishops a "Report on Liturgical Renewal". With this Report a whole process of evaluation of the liturgical renewal in India, commissioned by the CBCI a few years ago, comes to completion. Such a review, as is well known, had become necessary in view of controversies that had arisen in the country with regard to liturgical practice, especially in the field of adaptation and inculturation. The review was done in various stages: first by a Review Committee consisting of 4 bishops, second by an Evaluation Committee composed of 6 bishops appointed by the CBCI Standing Committee early last year. The CBCI Liturgy Commission had also presented to the Mangalore General Assembly (1978) "Guidelines for Liturgical Renewal" which were then approved by the general body. The present Report, presented by the CBCI Standing Committee to the General Assembly, is based on the findings of the previous Review and Evaluation Committees. It is an important document, not only because it authoritatively clarifies a number of controverted issues, but even more because of the structural changes it introduces with regard to competence in liturgical adaptation. The document was approved at the CBCI General Assembly by a secret ballot which carried more than a 2/3 majority of the total episcopal conference.

The introduction of the Report recalls that the CBCI has taken up "with enthusiasm" the task of Liturgical Renewal demanded by Vatican II. It "has been giving all along a clear push towards a living liturgy, having a long term and a short term policy". Inculturation and indigenization have been one aspect of this task. The Report notes, however, some deficiencies in the manner in which the process of adaptation and inculturation of the liturgy has been carried out, thus causing the tensions which called for the present review of the situation.

Looking back over this period we feel that certain fundamental aspects of this problem had been overlooked, namely, that India is a vast country with diverse languages and cultures; that in the Church there were large conglomerations of old Christian communities which had not been prepared through catechesis for the process of adaptation and inculturation. This may have been partly, if not largely, responsible for the agitation by some groups, which is causing anxiety to the Church in our country today. Because of this increasing tendency towards division and polarisation, the CBCI thought it fit to make an evaluation of the Liturgical Renewal.

The Document then recalls the principles that govern liturgical adaptation and inculturation. The basic and fundamental principle, "upheld by the magisterium of the Church down the centuries and crystallised in the teaching of Vatican II", is the principle of incarnation: "The effort to indigenize... can be traced back to Jesus Christ, the Word Incarnate." In view of this, the bishops "urge that all sections of the people of God keep an open mind to accept the changes as proposed by the teaching authority of the Church", while at the same time noting that "pastoral prudence demands that proper catechesis must precede all adaptation in the liturgy, whether it be at the parish, diocesan, regional or national level".

The Report quotes at length the various authoritative documents regarding liturgical adaptation and the authority competent to deal

with it. The Conciliar Constitution on Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, has laid down the principle of adaptation in general (n. 37) and the procedure to be followed for more radical adaptation where such is needed and for the experimentation leading to it (n. 40). The same Constitution declares that "regulation of the Sacred Liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See, and, as law may determine, on the Bishop"; in virtue of power conceded by law, the same "within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of bishops' conferences, legitimately established, with competence in given territories" (n. 22, 1-2). With regard to the liturgical experimentation that may be found necessary or useful, the Third Instruction on the Correct Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy has added further precisions to the regulations laid down by the Conciliar Constitution: "Permission will be granted in writing by (the) Sacred Congregation alone with clearly defined norms and under the responsibility of the competent local authority" (n.12). The same Instruction stipulates that "with regard to the mass those faculties for conducting experiments which were granted *in view of the reform of the rite* are no longer valid. With the publication of the New Roman Missal, the norms and the form of the Mass are those given in the General Instruction and the Ordo Missae. Adaptations already foreseen by the liturgical books should be defined more particularly by episcopal conferences and submitted to the Holy See for confirmation" (n. 12). For wider adaptations that may remain necessary the following provisions are made:

The Bishops should make a detailed study of the culture, traditions and special pastoral needs of their people. If they find there is need for some practical experimentation, this should be carried out by well-prepared groups, under the direction of men of judgment specially appointed for the task; they should not be made with large congregations, nor should they be given publicity; they should be few in number and carried out for periods of no longer than one year, after which a report should be made to the Holy See. The liturgical changes requested may not be put into effect while awaiting the reply of the Holy See. If changes are to be made in the structure of the rites or in the order of parts as given in the liturgical books, or if actions differing from the traditional ones or new texts are to be introduced, a complete outline and programme of the modifications should be proposed to the Holy See before any experiments are begun (n. 12).

Thus, the norms laid down by Rome regarding liturgical adaptation and experimentation are clear. Where the Report innovates is with regard to which Bishops' Conference is entitled to deal with Rome on matters of liturgical adaptation. Noting that India is a vast country with people of diverse cultures, the Report says:

This necessarily calls for a difference of approach varying from region to region, based on a certain cultural unity. In the light of this it is felt that the Regional Councils should enjoy some autonomy as to programmes of liturgical renewal in general and inculturation in particular.

For this purpose, basing ourselves on various studies mentioned above, we make the following recommendations:

In virtue of S.C. art. 22, 2 and 40, 1, the competent territorial authority in India for all liturgical matters is the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India.

However, in view of the great diversity of languages, social customs and cultures in our country, the CBCI, subject to the approval of the Holy See, delegates to the Regional Councils of Bishops, for a period of four years, its authority in all matters concerning liturgical adaptation and inculturation within the framework of the Conciliar Documents and the Instructions of the S.C. for Divine Worship, in accordance with the procedure indicated below:

a) The Regional Councils of Bishops will determine those points of liturgical adaptation and inculturation which are required for the Region.

b) A copy of these points will be forwarded to the CBCI Liturgical Commission for its comments if any; after which the Regional Councils of Bishops may proceed according to their pastoral responsibility.

The transfer of the competence for liturgical adaptation to the Regional Councils of Bishops necessitates a redefinition of the competence of the *CBCI Commission for Liturgy*. The Report makes the following adjustment:

The CBCI Commission for the Liturgy, as the organ of the CBCI at the national level, to animate, promote and coordinate liturgical renewal, shall carry out its task in keeping with the recommendations mentioned above.

It will guide the work of the National Liturgical Centre according to guidelines given earlier and will be responsible for it before the Bishops' Conference. It will also be at the service of the Regional Councils for guidance, if and when asked for.

As regards the *National Liturgical Centre of Bangalore* the Report first states the following:

We wish to place on record the excellent work that the National Liturgical Centre has to its credit in the field of liturgical renewal. In the recent past particularly, several allegations have been made against the Centre, specifically that it has proceeded arbitrarily in certain matters of inculturation. Having studied the matter and looked into the records at our disposal, we find that most of the allegations are unwarranted.

The function of the National Centre remains unchanged (though the CBCI Liturgical Commission is asked to review its specific terms of reference):

The National Liturgical Centre will continue as a Centre for liturgical renewal, always under the guidance of the CBCI through its Liturgy Commission and in keeping with the existing norms of procedure as explained above.

The rest of the Report is intended to meet concrete situations that have arisen in the country by pronouncing on facts and giving clear directions. Regarding *unauthorised experimentation* the Report has the following to say:

Though most of our priests perform the liturgical services correctly, we are painfully aware that a few groups and individuals are indulging in unauthorised experimentations. These abuses are causing scandal and are the source of division and confusion among the people of God. While we certainly would want to encourage reform and adaptation in liturgy, we wish to remind all concerned of the directives of the Vatican Council and the subsequent instructions of

the Holy See that no experimentation shall be carried out without the due approval and sanction of the competent ecclesiastical authority. "Therefore no other person, not even a priest, may add, remove or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority" (S.C., n. 22, 3).

Another item calling for clarifications is the "*Twelve Points of Adaptation*". The Report says:

Regarding the Twelve Points of Adaptation, it is clear from the documents that the procedure adopted was correct. The Ernakulam CBCI General Meeting of 1970 confirmed the above. (See Report of the CBCI General Meeting, Ernakulam, 1970, p. 61). Given the optional character of the implementation of these Twelve Points, we see no purpose in the controversy being carried on in the Press. We are distressed at the unfair use that is made of the columns of the Letters to the Editor in some of our Catholic Papers which unnecessarily continue this controversy. In the wider interests of the Church we strongly urge that the controversy on all matters connected with this problem should cease. Let all keep in mind that these are optional. We repeat that necessary catechesis should precede their introduction.

The "Indian Anaphora" has never been authorised by the CBCI and may not be used.

About the use of an Indian Order of the Mass, incorporating some or all of the Twelve Points, it is for the Regional Councils and the local Ordinary to decide.

In conclusion, the Report states: "Liturgy which is the source and summit of Christian life is and ought to be the worship of the Father in heaven of people united in love and through Christ who is our way to the Father. We, therefore, appeal to all sections of the people of God to foster that spirit of unity and charity which has to flow from our worship in spirit and truth."

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The importance of the Report lies primarily in the structural change it introduces with regard to competence in liturgical matters. Up-till now, safeguarding the authority of the local bishops, the only competent authority for regulating the liturgy in the country by virtue of power conceded by law was the entire body of the CBCI. This meant that liturgical changes to be (optionally) introduced in individual dioceses required a 2/3 majority vote of the CBCI, previous to being sent for approval to the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship. It is a known fact that changes desired by bishops of entire regions were blocked because they failed to obtain the required majority. It is even better known that liturgical changes which obtained the required majority gave rise to controversies in regions where they were less desired, the power of local bishops to withhold their implementation in their individual dioceses notwithstanding. In this situation the movement for adaptation and inculturation of the liturgy was greatly hampered, though the Indian Hierarchy had repeatedly committed itself to the principle of liturgical adaptation. The Guidelines for Liturgical Renewal approved at the Mangalore General Assembly of the CBCI (1978) had left this situation substantially

unchanged.¹ The CBCI remained the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority with "the overall responsibility for inculturation in the liturgy", concrete proposals for adaptation and the setting up of experimental centres having to be sent by it to the Holy See. Regional Councils of Bishops were to deal with the S. Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship through the CBCI also in matters of adaptation, and required the recognition of the CBCI for setting up experimental centres (in consultation with the local Ordinary). Their competence to deal directly with the Roman Congregation remained limited to the matter of translation of liturgical books in the regional languages.

According to the new legislation — subject to the approval of the same by the Holy See — the CBCI remains the competent territorial authority "for all liturgical matters"; but it "delegates to the Regional Councils of Bishops, for a period of four years, its authority in all matters concerning liturgical adaptation and inculturation within the framework of the Conciliar Documents and the Instructions of the S.C. for Divine Worship". The procedure foresees that "the Regional Councils of Bishops will determine those points of liturgical adaptation and inculturation which are required for the Region", and that, after informing the CBCI Liturgy Commission of their proposals, they may proceed "according to their pastoral responsibility". This means — subject to the Holy See's approval — that for all matters of liturgical adaptation and inculturation requiring the sanction of the Holy See, the Regional Councils of Bishops are now entitled to deal directly with the S. Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship, as well as for the setting up of centres of liturgical experimentation. The Report mentions, as thus depending on the competence of the Regional Councils of Bishops, the use of the Indian Order of the Mass. But many more items may be thought of, for which requests have often been made in recent years like for instance communion in the hand. The "Indian Anaphora", as is well known, failed to obtain the 2/3 majority vote of the CBCI; it can now eventually be sanctioned by Regional Councils of Bishops and introduced in Regions with the necessary approval of the Holy See. As for the "Twelve Points of Adaptation" it is clear that the approval already given by the CBCI and confirmed by the Holy See stands; the Report clearly reaffirms that the procedure adopted for their approval was correct.

With this new legislation the CBCI has taken a bold and important step. It has recognized the reality of the country, with its great diversity of languages and cultures, its Christian Communities of vastly different backgrounds and traditions, its greatly diverse pastoral and missionary situations. It may be foreseen that the new legislation will mark the rebirth of a movement which in the past suffered much from the adoption of a uniform policy for the whole country. It may also be hoped that the new legislation will bring to an end the painful and sterile controversies of the past few years.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

1. The text of these Guidelines and a commentary on the same are found in VIDYAJYOTI 1978, pp. 186-188.

Book Reviews

Church and Mission

The Open Church. Invitation to a Messianic Lifestyle. By Jürgen MOLT-MANN. London, SCM Press, 1978. Pp. 128. £ 3.50.

Moltmann himself refers in this slim volume to the important book on Ecclesiology recently published by him under the title *The Church in the Power of the Spirit* (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1979, pp. 138-139), in which some of the concepts found here are developed more extensively. But whereas that book was a scholarly treatment not easily accessible to non-professionals, this new one speaks to the congregation. This does not mean that the studies collected here are a reduced version of the theologian's view, but rather that "what cannot be said simply does not need to be written at all". Not only does Moltmann speak here to the congregation, but also "as a member of the congregation". The central theme of the book is that the Church cannot be only the Church for the people (which would perpetuate a paternalistic and clerical mentality), but must become the Church of the people. Moltmann's contention is, in fact, that the Church for the people, however kindly administered, is a dying institution; the Church of the people, with a reduced number or members, is the Church of the future. It is this committed congregation that he wishes to invite to a messianic life-style. "Mission should neither bring the people again into the Church nor the Church into the people, but rather discover the Church of the people and live the brotherhood of Jesus in the brotherhood of the 'least of these'." The Church is the congregation. The "New Reformation" which is required today will consist in changing the parish into a congregation. By this Moltmann means to transform it from a paternal institution into a fellowship of brothers, that is a community of friends in Jesus living for the forsaken and the helpless. For the congregation is an "Open Church", struggling against all forms of social inhumanity.

Moltmann's book is a powerful affirmation of the role of the laity and as such will render a great service. The problem remains, however — as was already felt in the previous book mentioned above — how in the Church of the people authority is to be exercised and where it comes from. Moltmann sees the problem but, avowedly, has not answer to offer: "I have no answers, but must pose the questions." He is convinced that authority from above will always deny the people, thus denying the Gospel. The people 'from below' must be allowed to achieve the freedom intended by Christ. His view is onesided and there remains to combine the freedom of the people with a ministry of service to them given by Christ to his Church.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Mission Resumed? By Michael WINTER. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979. Pp. 129. £ 2.95.

This book is written as a sequel to the author's *Mission or Maintenance*, published in 1973 (cf. THE CLERGY MONTHLY 1973, pp. 452-453). In preparation for the National Pastoral Congress to be held at Liverpool in May 1980, Winter returns to the theses which his previous volume had put forward. He remains convinced that the Church in England has not yet experienced the results which might reasonably have been expected from the Second Vatican Council. The reason for this is that Church's pastoral mission has not been sufficiently renewed in the line opened by the Council. This is not to say that nothing has been done, but that much bolder steps need to be taken than have been so far. In his first volume Winter's diagnosis of the Church in England was that its policy seemed — wrongly — to be ordained to "maintenance" rather than to "mission". In the present volume he acknowledges now a will to resume the mission, and enquires into the means appropriate for this task. Hence the title: *Mission Resumed?* What is required is a complete overhauling of pastoral activity. Winter is extremely

well informed of the pastoral scene in his country, and writes from much personal pastoral experience. His suggestions for serious reform and "radical change" are, moreover, based on the deepest conciliar intuitions and on sound theology. They range from a thorough implementation of the structures of co-responsibility set up by the council, to a serious reorganization of parishes and dioceses. In line with the present pastoral trend, Winter rightly insists on the creation of "basic communities" destined to become the Church-cells of the future. He then faces squarely the problem of ministry posed to the Church by these communities of the future. He advocates strongly—as he did already in his previous volume—the ordination of married people who, as "part-time" workers will cater to the needs of basic communities, while the full-time priests of the traditional type will operate at the broader level of the parish.

Though the book is limited to the English scene, there is no doubt that the questions it raises are valid in many other Churches, and the solutions it proposes often applicable elsewhere. It should therefore be of interest to all those, especially bishops and priests, who wish to update the Church's pastoral mission in the Spirit of the Council.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

The Hidden Motives of Pastoral Action. Latin American Reflections. By Juan Luis SEGUNDO, S.J. Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1978. Pp. 141. \$ 5.95.

Here is another book seeking a new pastoral approach to the Church's mission that would meet the needs of today. But the context here is Latin American. The book is written by the well known author of *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity*, the only complete theological series to have arisen to date from Latin American liberation theology. Segundo endeavours here to lay bare the "hidden motives" of present pastoral action in Latin American Churches, and the "unconfessed fears" with which it is beset. He sums up the situation as follows: "Psychologically we are fearful for ourselves in the face of other people's freedom. Theologically we are fearful for the salvation of the masses if they are deprived of protective institutions. Pastorally we are fearful for the Gospel message, suspecting that it does not have the power it once had to attract

people on its own" (p. 106). Hence the pastoral action of the Churches remains authoritarian, paternalist and institutionalised. Room needs to be created for freedom, participation and creativity—in short for the values of the Gospel. In two short chapters Segundo suggests "A Different Approach" and "Elements of a Different Ecclesiology". The diagnosis of the "hidden motives" certainly applies far beyond the boundaries of the Latin American Continent, and pastors in other Churches will be stirred by it to a fruitful pastoral reflection. We may, however, regret that the author has hardly begun in this volume to outline an alternative model.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Training for Community Ministries. (A Series of Eight Training Manuals). By F. LOBINGER and others. London, Collins Liturgical Publications, 1979. £7 per set.

This new series of "how-to-do-it" booklets, originally drawn up for the pastoral needs of Churches in Africa, is designed for a systematic training of adult lay leaders in every aspect of a community's liturgy of the word and sacrament. It includes the following areas of learning in skills, each in an individual manual averaging between 30 and 80 pages: preparing parents for infant baptism; assistant ministers of the Eucharist (e.g. for distributing Communion in church and to the sick); sacristans; hymn-leaders; readers; preaching; leading the community service; funeral leaders. A sample packet of pictures that can be used in connection with the first booklet, and a leader's manual for the last are also included in the special introductory pack of material. All of this material is presented simply, yet in a well thought-out (and doctrinally sound) pattern. The authors follow the approach of functional learning: motivation, skill and only then the theology behind the skill. Not only is it expected that competent lay leaders will emerge from the learning experience, but also that the local community will grow in cohesion and mutual responsibility in this on-the-spot training. As the publishers' handbill asserts: "Training must be over long periods, and must aim at the gradual assumption of real responsibility. To avoid a new kind of clericalism, all monopoly must be avoided."

Not only does such a series seem indispensable to any parish—even though the training might have to be adapted to the present state and stage of evolving lay leadership in any particular community; the series also promises exciting changes in the structures of parish communities. Perhaps one example will suffice. The first words of introduction for the manual on "Training for Preaching" reads: "This booklet has been prepared as an aid in the training of preachers who do not go through a seminary. They could be deacon-trainees, leaders of Sunday services, leaders of funerals, official lay preachers, or Christians who often give witness during Holy Mass." The local Churches in Africa have much to teach the rest of us!

J. CURRIE, S.J.

Liturgy and Sacraments

The Once and the Future Liturgy. By J. D. CRICHTON. Dublin, Veritas Publications, 1977. Pp. 143, (No price given.)

Christian Celebration: The Prayer of the Church. By J. D. CRICHTON. London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1978. Pp. 134. £ 3.50.

A former parish priest with vast pastoral experience, J. D. Crichton is also a well known authority in liturgy. We have formerly reviewed a previous volume of the trilogy on *Christian Celebration*, devoted to the Sacraments (cf. THE CLERGY MONTHLY, 1974, p. 464), and appreciated the author's pastoral approach to liturgical renewal in the line of the Second Vatican Council. The second book under review here, devoted to "The Prayer of the Church", completes that trilogy on *Christian celebration*.

1. *The Once and the Future Liturgy* is a general treatment of liturgical renewal. Crichton reminds us of what the liturgy was before Vatican II and shows what enormous progress has been made with the official implementation of the Council's Constitution on Liturgy. But he does not stop there: having recalled the past and exposed the present, he concentrates on the future, convinced as he is that liturgical renewal remains an ongoing process to be pursued even after the post-conciliar revision of liturgical rites has been completed. Questions remain with regard to liturgical language—here English—which call for an

answer. More importantly, the whole field of liturgical adaptation remains open, having thus far been only superficially tackled. Liturgical celebration raises, moreover, theological and pastoral questions with regard to communities and ministries. Without devaluing the parish, Crichton advocates celebration in small groups and stresses the pastoral need for "basic communities". This leads him to favour—with many recent authors—the ordination of married community leaders who would cater to the liturgical needs of such communities; in the process he also examines the benefits that can be derived from the renewal of the permanent diaconate. In these and many other questions he displays a sound theological judgment and an unmistakable pastoral concern. He believes that the present state of liturgical renewal is only "the end of the beginning". Here is a sure guide for all those who, following "the movement of the Spirit", wish to contribute to the Church's future liturgy.

2. The third volume in the series *Christian Celebration*, devoted to *The Prayer of the Church*, has the same qualities as its predecessors on the Mass and the Sacraments. The subject was perhaps more difficult, and the author does not dissimulate the difficulty, experienced by many priests even after the reform of the *Divine Office* (1971), to make the "Prayer of the Church" into real prayer. His aim is to show how this is in fact possible, not only for clerics but also for Christian Communities according to the present mind of the Church. With this aim in view, Crichton first studies the theological questions involved: The Problem of Liturgical Prayer, The Prayer of the Church. There follows a historical sketch of the *Divine Office* and a chapter on the Liturgy of the Hours. The various parts of the Office, Psalms, Lectionaries, Hymnary, Intercessions, are then studied in separate chapters. The last chapter is on "The Celebration of the *Divine Office*". All this provides a sound knowledge of the Office and of the principles that have guided its post-Vatican II reform. The book is, moreover, packed with suggestions on how to use the Office intelligently for private recitation and community celebration. Crichton is aware that the Office as it now stands is still not perfect, and he makes suggestions for further improvements. He nevertheless concludes: "It must be said that the Church has put into our hands an instrument of prayer

and if it is to be judged over-elaborate in some ways, its rules are sane and flexible and it can be used for the purpose for which it was devised" (p. 128). The book is highly recommended to priests and pastors aware that to pray and make people pray in the Church's name is an important part of their function, and desirous to do this better.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Do Sacraments Change? By M. AMALADOSS, S.J. *Bangalore, Theological Publications in India*, 1979. Pp. 154. Rs 12.

This book is the thesis which the author presented at the "Institut Catholique", Paris, in fulfilment of the requirements for a doctorate in theology. The question of the variable and invariable elements in sacramental rites is not new. It has often been disputed in Christian tradition, has been taken up by the Council of Trent, and has again surfaced in the recent sacramental theology. Traditionally the question was asked in terms of the validity of the sacraments which are being conferred. The post-Conciliar movement for liturgical adaptation, especially in mission countries, has however given new importance to the question and placed it in a much broader context. Fr Amaladoss' intention is to enquire into the structure of sacramental symbols with a view to finding valid criteria to decide which are the elements that pertain to the 'substance' of the sacraments instituted by Christ and are therefore immutable. With this end in view he has recourse to the findings of the recent science of semiology which studies the structure of signs and symbols as they operate in human and social communication. This helps to show the importance of the context in which communication takes place; it also helps to show that what is essential, and therefore immutable, in sacramental symbols is the significance attached to them by Christ. Provided this is preserved, the matter and form which traditionally make up the substance of the rite could remain mutable, even where the N.T. testifies clearly to a definite matter used by Christ himself, as in the case of the eucharistic bread and wine. Fr Amaladoss' position coincides with that of a growing number of theologians today, but he has the merit of basing it on a serious study of symbolism.

It is to be regretted that the production of this scholarly book is seriously defec-

tive. The printing is poor; the text itself is marred by many misprints, especially in the foot-notes. This unhappily may deter the serious reader.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

The Eucharist: The Bread of Life. By Ernest LUSSIER, S.S.S. *New York, Alba House*, 1977. Pp. 247. \$ 5.95.

This volume completes a trilogy on the Eucharist, of which the first two volumes have been reviewed in this periodical (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1975, p. 335; 1977, p. 375). Like the previous volumes, this one too is made up of short chapters (29 in all), avoiding all scholarly appearance (there are no foot-notes) and reproducing what seem to have been spiritual conferences. Many of these chapters treat of biblical themes related to the Eucharist, without entering into exegetical discussions. A few give historical notes on the Cenacle, the Catacombs, etc. Two only are devoted to Eucharistic Theology Today. These are more by way of a *status quaestionis* on the questions that are raised than of a contribution to their solutions. They do not seem to add to what the author has previously written. The theology put forward in the volume is rather traditional though insights from Vatican II have been merged with it. With its limitations, the volume will be used with profit by priests for conferences as well as by sisters and catechists.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Love in Christian Morality

Agape. An Ethical Analysis. By Gene OUTKA. *Yale Publications in Religion*, 17. *New Haven and London, Yale University Press*, 1978. Pp. x-321. \$ 4.95.

This is a doctoral dissertation presented at Yale University, under the direction of Professor James M. Gustafson. Its author, who is an associate professor of religious studies at the same University, also did post-doctoral research work in analytic moral philosophy at Oxford.

The study subjects to analysis, mainly from the ethical point of view, a notable portion of the vast literature on love written by both Protestant and Roman Catholic thinkers. The period covered goes from around 1930 to 1972, when the thesis was first published.

After inquiring into love, mainly neighbour-love, as a normative ethical principle, the author relates this standard of love to self-love and justice, with which it is often compared. He then applies the standard to judgments about moral conduct and thus meets the questions of rules, of situation ethics, of intention and virtues and of grace. In order to find out "why be loving" and to justify the principle of love as moral standard, he considers the more specifically religious and theological aspects of love, the question of grace and its relation to nature, and of the contents of human agape. After an extensive chapter consecrated to Karl Barth, the author ends with a "revisit", where the major claims of his detailed discussions are explored.

One can but admire the manner in which the author succeeds in succinctly exposing the insights of so many writers on such a complex subject. The scholarship of the analytical research is of high standard and demands from the reader a sustained attention. The book is obviously meant for specialists. It helps them to penetrate more deeply into the thought of most of the contemporary writers in the matter of agape.

G. GILLEMEN, S.J.

Sexual Morality

Sexual Morality: A Catholic Perspective. By Philip S. KEANE, S.S. *New York, Paulist Press, 1977. Pp. viii-236. \$ 5.95.*

The author starts by noting that often moral theology talks about particular problems in human sexuality without formulating an overall perspective from which to view these problems. So he himself makes two basic statements for a theology of human sexuality. First, human sexuality is a basic gift of God, although it can be misused. The second is that it is a gift that touches the human person on all levels of his existence. Hence, all theories that overstress physical aspects, or are overly romantic, or purely societal must be rejected. Instead, the author intends to adopt a wholistic perspective based on biblical anthropology. He recognizes that the Scriptures definitely reject all dehumanizing forms of sexuality such as sexual cruelty, rape, or prostitution, although he would not push the Scriptures too far on specific questions such as masturbation or homosexuality.

There is no doubt that here we have a quite clear and consistent view of sexual morality. However, the author feels the need for presenting some basic principles of fundamental moral theology before going on to specific points. Thereby, he has laid bare his presuppositions which other writers on the subject would do well to emulate. He has every right to adopt a particular stance, but he seems to oversimplify the current debate on moral absolutes by making it appear that this is almost universally accepted and that any other position is just outdated. He accepts the view of Bruno Schuller, Richard McCormick and others that nothing is a *moral evil* apart from the circumstances and the intention of the moral agent. Such acts as killing and masturbation would in themselves be at most *ontic evils*. The view supporting moral absolutes, or that some actions are *intrinsically evil*, is dismissed as 'physicalism'. It does not occur to the author that there may be an intermediate view which admits the existence of intrinsically (moral) evil acts, although in some conflict situations the perplexed conscience may perceive them as lesser evils (cf. my forthcoming book, *Christian Living According to Vatican II*, Bangalore, TPI, 1980).

In the light of updated information on masturbation, the author presents two contemporary views. The first would consider it always wrong, but judge concrete cases leniently because of lack of sufficient deliberation and full consent. In the second view the ontic evil of masturbation would not always be a serious moral evil in the concrete. The author obviously chooses the second, adding that in some cases there would be no moral evil.

After referring to the changed perspective regarding homosexuality, the author takes the position that "there is a priority or normativity to heterosexual acts" (p. 87), and hence "even the best homosexual acts always contain a significant aspect of ontic evil" (p. 88). He would then want the Church and society to refuse to permit homosexual marriages. But he holds that in some circumstances, the ontic evil does not become an objective moral evil.

The reader by now has no difficulty in anticipating what he would say regarding premarital intercourse, and adultery. Still, he declares that 'casual,' as opposed to 'committed', premarital intercourse (and heavy petting) always involves a moral as well as ontic evil.

As would be expected, he differs from the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* regarding the morality of contraception, although he admits that "the presently available methods of artificial birth control involve ontic evil" (p. 127), and that "the one means of birth control the Church has approved, periodic abstinence, will emerge as the most desirable" *ibid.*). Regarding sterilization he adopts the modified understanding of the principle of double effect, which does not seem to be helpful since it is like 'pouring new wine into an old bottle'.

Concerning marital breakdown, the author does not consider the Church's present liberal annulment policies satisfactory. He would favour a nuanced allowance of second marriages, although he admits that this would not fully respect the Christian ideal. Alternately, he would favour a 'good faith' solution, at least in the internal forum, permitting the reception of the sacraments to those who are in irregular situations.

The author has some helpful considerations about the significance of celibacy and the nature of celibate close friendships. He also provides valuable insights on other issues. Hence the whole work has considerable value even though the validity of its positions depends largely on the author's basic suppositions, as already pointed out. These positions clearly depart from the teachings of the Magisterium as reaffirmed in the recent Vatican Declaration on Sexual Ethics.

G. LOBO, S.J.

Embodiment An Approach to Sexuality and Christian Theology. By James B. NELSON. London, SPECK, 1979. Pp. 303. £ 6.50.

This is a thought provoking book based on studies in several fields. It goes beyond the usual question: what does Christian faith have to say about our lives as sexual beings? It also deals with the query: what does our experience as sexual human beings mean for the way in which we understand and attempt to live out the faith? The author is convinced that if sexual questions are also religious questions, so too are religious questions sexual ones. Lest he be taken for a latter Freud, it should be clear that he takes sexuality in the wider comprehensive sense which does not only involve biologically based needs, but also has more symbolic meanings, psychological and cultural orientations.

Sexuality is understood as our self-understanding as male and female, affectional orientations towards those of the opposite and/or of the same sex, and our attitudes to our own bodies and those of others.

The author brings out the importance of the body in biblical anthropology and Christian doctrines like the incarnation. Sexuality becomes a means of human communication. He also traces the negative elements in Christian tradition, derived largely from Hellenistic dualism, that left its mark on theological thinking and Christian life down to our time leading to body alienation. The dualism of body and soul, compounded with the stereotype of man being more rational and woman more emotional, has led to the sexist dualism of man's superiority over woman. However, salvation has a sexual dimension, not in the sense that we are saved by sexuality, but that we are given new life, not in spite of our sexual body-selves, but precisely in and through this entire selfhood which we are. The doctrine of bodily resurrection comes to confirm this.

Here the question of the sexuality of Jesus is touched upon, it seems without sufficient care, not to speak of delicacy. While it is necessary to admit the total reality of the incarnation, we cannot thereby conclude to disorderly sexual inclinations in Jesus nor to his probable marriage. The first point is taken care of by the perfect integration of his personality. Regarding the second, the author seems to have missed the positive significance of virginity here and elsewhere in the book.

Coming to sexual ethics, the author repeatedly rejects any normative value to normal intercourse in marriage. He calls sex 'the language of love', but denies any intrinsic element in that language. The way is open to the approval of masturbation, homosexual activity and so on. He even sees potentiality for positive goodness in such acts. Thus masturbation for those whom he calls 'androgynous personalities', could be a communion within and contribute to personal integration. While this line of thinking deserves attention, it should not become a justification for every form of deviation, ultimately leading to the debasement of the human personality. There is enough ipsation and exploitation already.

Finally, the author calls for a 'resexualizing' of the Church's theology. This is all right if it means regaining a positive view of this divine gift, acknowledging

the equal and complementary nature of man and woman, and recognizing the validity of feminine images for the divinity. But one should be more careful in speaking of sexual mysticism, for this is easily open to distortion as the author himself seems to be aware.

This work cannot be considered definitive in any sense, but it could be welcomed as a basis for debate on important issues that touch the Church and modern man today.

G. LOBO, S.J.

Marriage Counselling

Love is a Couple. Evenings for Couples (Leader's Guide). Evenings for Couples (Response Sheets).

Parents are Lovers. Evenings for Parents (Leader's Guide). Evenings for Parents (Response Sheets).

By Chuck GALLAGHER, S.J. and others. Bombay, St Paul Publications, 1979. Rs 22 for each set. (Available from Examiner Press Bookshop, 35 Dalal Street, Bombay 400023.)

As Vatican II has pointed out, marriage is an 'intimate partnership of love'. But often even in apparently 'good' marriages there is no real partnership. Instead, there seem to be 'married singles', somehow living together to fulfil a social role. This state of affairs arises largely because of a lack of communication between the partners. For the last several years the movement of *Marriage Encounter* has succeeded in bringing new life and hope to hundreds of thousands of couples, of whom many thousands in India.

Fr Gallagher, one of the foremost promoters of the movement in the United States, has prepared these two sets of three volumes in order to facilitate encounter sessions. In each set, there is a general exposition for a full weekend, as well as a guide for the leader and response sheets for the participants. The last two in each set are based on the by now well known serendipity model. The volumes of response sheets each contain 80 questionnaires—enough for 20 persons for 4 Evenings. It is to be hoped that many Encounter Groups will avail themselves of these valuable aids.

G. LOBO, S.J.

So You Want to Get Married!
By R. H. LESSER. Allahabad, St

Paul Publications, 1978. Pp. 136. Rs 5.50.

The author knows his subject, he knows his readers, and he knows how to communicate his message. The present book is largely the fruit of a rich experience in guiding engaged and married couples. The ideas are fresh and invariably maintain the attention of the reader.

Today, more than ever, there is need for an in-depth preparation for the sublime and difficult vocation of marriage. This book should be of help in this matter. It should also be a guide to happy married life.

G.L.

Good News for Today

Get Through till Nightfall. By Colin MORRIS. Glasgow, Collins (Fount Paperbacks), 1979. Pp. 126. 95 p.

Living Words. By Michel QUOIST. Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1979. Pp. 85. £ 1.95.

Is the Gospel really *good news today*? Does it offer answers to contemporary humankind's struggles and anxieties? And to its expectations and hungers as well? And is the Word *presented* as such by the ministers of the Gospel? Commenting upon our times, one recent observer admitted that unless the essential message of the Gospel can be formulated in the course of a typical conversation running no more than a half-hour, then there simply will be no evangelisation.

The two small books under review, one of whose authors is perhaps better known in Catholic circles than the other, represent attempts to use the modern media to make the Gospel relevant in a brief time to a wide audience. The first is a series of fifty "thoughts for the day", broadcast over the BBC; the second, some thirteen televised Sunday sermonettes based on the Gospel readings of the day.

Most of us are familiar with Quoist's ability to make the faith come alive in the ordinary events of daily life. If we have read his *Prayers of Life*, we shall not be surprised by his down-home applications and reflections on the Gospel. The general impression here, however, strikes me as being more sombre and sombre than the previous work. In his own words, it might be summed up: "My friends, if our faith, the outward signs of our faith, and our obligations

are declining, it is because the face of Jesus Christ is vanishing from our sight" (p. 25).

Morris, a Methodist minister and missionary, a decorated freedom-fighter in Zambia, and presently a broadcaster and telecaster in London, draws from a wide range of experience to share his faith vignettes, which he strives to make "witty without being self-consciously clever, serious but not dull, homely but not vulgar, earthed in the everyday world and yet offering the stuff of which dreams are made, religious without being churchy, committed but not dogmatic, and above all evangelical in the sense that the chief aim is neither to divert, entertain nor inform but to *change* something or someone" (p. 9).

Both authors would agree that an effective Gospel minister need be neither a scholar nor an analyst; much less should he try to tickle the ears of his audience by topical flashiness. Morris himself presents a helpful distinction — helpful especially to us who try to preach the Gospel — with regard to that well-worn term, "relevance": "Relevance means the preacher neither echoing the world nor seeking to lead it, but confronting it. There is a grand irrelevance about preaching, the sacrifice of immediate application for basic certitudes which speak to the perpetual human condition. These truths soar beyond the limits of topicality, yet touch down in every time and challenge men to see themselves and their actions in wider context than the standards of the day" (p. 30).

No doubt, both books labour under the limitation of being second-hand presentations, one step removed from their original, oral delivery. Moreover, the reflections are simple and not profound, in that they were intended for a wide spectrum of listeners. Still, I would recommend both books, not only for their insights which might jog our own faith into greater intensity, but also as examples of how we might make the Gospel into "good news", even within a very limited time and for a widely diversified audience.

J. CURRIE, S.J.

Why Are You Afraid? By Michael BUCKLEY. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979. Pp. xi-131. £ 2.95. (Available from Examiner Press Bookshop, 35 Dalal Street, Bombay 400023.)

Fear is a universal experience, and our desperate efforts to hide this fact

only intensify its grip upon us. Having the courage to *admit* fear, says the author of this thoughtful book, is the beginning of one's conquest of fear. Fear is a crippling disease, but still worse are man's destructive efforts to handle it, to cope with it in prejudice, hatred and aggression. These consequences are all too evident in trouble-spots around the world, in the Middle East, in South Africa, and in Northern Ireland where Fr Buckley founded the Peace Movement in 1977. He knows whereof he speaks. Much of his active ministry is, in fact, dedicated to the causes of peace and reconciliation.

With a craftsman's skill, the author weaves Scripture, literature and personal experience into a highly readable analysis of fear and its sole remedy. He traces fear in the life of Jesus, which was part of his full humanity; in the life of Peter, who represents all of us; in the life of the institutional Church. He studies the big fears of this age and of every age: fear of change; fear of God; fear of oneself; and fear of others.

The antidote for fear is *faith*, for just as fear breeds hatred, so faith engenders love. Faith in God, faith in others, faith in oneself, faith in the Spirit-led process of life — these "faiths" enable us to overcome fear. If Gethsemane is the penultimate of Jesus' own fears, it is also the record of faith overcoming fear. If Peter denied Christ because of fear, he boldly proclaimed him Lord, because of the resurrection gift of faith. Faith is *power*, power to accept, to let go, to trust, to love.

Such is the central message of this book. In so far as fear is the biggest demon of our lives — personal, spiritual, societal — these reflections are bound to strike a resonant note with the reader. "You of little faith, why are you afraid?" The answer lies in the question.

J. CURRIE, S.J.

Women

Women Religious Unafraid. Select Reprints from the Bulletins of International Union of Superiors General, Rome, from 1975-1978. Bangalore, Asian Trading Corporation, 1979. Pp. 268. Rs 22.50.

Reviewing this book presents me with some problems. First of all, its collection of articles and addresses, more than half of which are authored by men, is nonetheless aimed at inspiring *women* religious in their unique vocation. Whe-

ther or not it succeeds might be better assessed by a Sister than by me. Secondly, the title seems to indicate a well-intentioned desire to allay fears. But fear, to me, is a very concrete thing, arising from the complexities of a given situation. I am not at all convinced that personal fears can be adequately handled in general exhortations. Fears there are, and personal and group renewal must begin with facing them down and acquiring a measure of self-respect and self-confidence, but the victory is won more in the trenches of here-and-now interaction, than in the back benches listening, or in a comfortable armchair reading.

My own observation — admittedly for what it is worth! — is that, in their praiseworthy quest for renewal, Sisters are suffering from an overdose of "messages", usually administered by "the other half", some consisting of "pep pills", stirring them up to be fervent disciples of the latest movement; others serving as "tranquillisers", rendering them happy in a comfortable if hazy "fog". But most of these messages are accepted without question and uncritically, so that the courage to make a decision on one's own, to commit oneself freely and personally (even as a community), is most often lacking. And fear, among other debilitating personal experiences, is never banished without the courage of personal affirmation.

Having said this, I must also confess that there is much valuable material contained in these pages. The twenty articles, including the present pope's address to religious superiors just a year ago, first appeared in separate bulletins of the U.I.S.G., but are now grouped together under three headings: (1) "The Woman Religious"; (2) "Living the Vows Today"; and (3) "Journeying in Faith". In the first part, which deals with the consecration and mission of the religious Sister, I found the back-to-back presentations of Azevedo and Motte, tracing the past and analysing data in the present, to be the very core of the book. The section on the vows, combining personal experience with theological reflection, is uniformly good. The third section includes reflections on community life, spiritual renewal, the catechesis of religious life, and the importance of a congregation's charism.

There is much to be gained by individuals and communities reflecting on the general notions offered here. These are sound principles, based upon up-to-

date theology and, in some cases, personal experience. Let us hope that the reader(s) can assimilate them into an awareness that leads to concrete action and mobilisation against fear. For in the end, it will of necessity be women (religious) who will liberate themselves, or — as Rosemary Haughton has put it — who will throw off the domination of men (clerics) as masters to reclaim them as friends and co-workers. This will of necessity, it seems to me, involve some structural changes sooner or later, however much the institution may resist, and so I cannot agree with the compiler of this volume (who must be commended in other regards for her careful and thoughtful selection) when she says in the "Foreword": "Today we are no longer concerned with updating of structures, for that stage is crossed, but our main concern is to deepen the interior renewal already begun but which must go on ceaselessly as it is an on-going process." An essential part of the "journey of faith" is being open to the future, whatever it may be, wherever it may lie. Herein precisely lies the joy of wholehearted commitment to God, for he is Lord of the future!

J. CURRIE, S.J.

Good News for Women. Edited by Jyotsna CHATTERJI. Delhi, I.S.P.C.K., 1979. Pp. 78. Rs 3.50.

The aim of this booklet is to help members of Bible study groups to acquire a new consciousness of woman as a whole person in the eyes of God, made for full participation in God's purpose for this world. The following points are outlined for each of the eleven themes: aims, Bible readings, prayers, suggestions for presentation by the leader and for response of the participants, and discussion questions. For some themes, there are also case studies.

Here and there, the use of the Bible seems to be a bit too free. The way sterilization has been casually introduced in a case study on Women's Right to Choice may seem to imply that it is a positive good. While it is for the person to decide whether she wants to go in for such a measure, responsible parenthood should not be identified with this drastic measure even by implication. Apart from these remarks, we think that this study guide will be quite useful.

G. LOMO, S.J.

Religions

Judaism. By Samuel T. LACHS and Saul P. WACHS. *Niles, Illinois, Argus Communications*, 1979. Pp. 101. £1.50. (Available from Examiner Press Bookshop, 35 Dalal Street, Bombay 400023.)

The book belongs to the "Major World Religions Series". The series "attempts to present the religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, China and Africa in their unity and variety. On the one hand, the authors interpret the traditions about which they are writing as a faith or a world-view which instills the lives of their adherents with value, meaning and direction. On the other hand, each volume attempts to analyze a particular religion in terms of its historical and cultural settings. This latter dimension means that the authors are interested in the present form of a religious tradition as well as its past development" (p. x). This program delineates the approach and the main features of the book.

The work consists of four parts. The first part focuses on the history of Judaism from Egypt and Exodus to the creation of the present-day State of Israel. The period from Abraham to Moses is not taken into account since the patriarchal sagas are written in the form of "ancient history", that is, "historical experience embellished by legend and cultural stories" (p. 2). The purpose of the chapter evidently is not to give a detailed exposition of Israel's history; only a summary survey can be given while indicating the main characteristics of each period and its meaning for both the political and religious development of the nation. The account of the fate of the Jews during the Christian era offers revealing and painful reading. The attitude of the Church towards the Jews throughout so many centuries is set forth fairly. This first part is the longest of the four and makes up nearly half of the book. Though, strictly speaking, being only an account of events, this historical survey is important in the study of a people whose political and religious life are one. The history of Israel, moreover, shows well how religions develop within particular historical and cultural traditions, in particular times and places, and how they in turn influence their setting.

Part II examines the "ideas and ideals" which are at the root of Israel's belief. The concept of Covenant has always been

central in Judaism. Associated with it are the concepts of God, Israel and the Torah — according to a popular saying the three are one. The following points are touched on: 1. "human beings and their nature", more particularly the question of evil and human freedom, asceticism and the pleasures of life, poverty and riches; 2. "people and society" or the relationship between the individual and the community; 3. "the concept of God" or Jewish theology, viz. considerations about the relationship between God and man, God the creator of all, totally spiritual, omnipresent, omniscient, father, judge and king. One must note that Jewish theology is of a practical rather than of a philosophical or speculative character. Israel never developed anything like a systematic theology. The rabbis were more interested in seeking principles that would guide a Jew's daily life.

Part III exposes "the life cycle of the Jew" with the rituals that give meaning to the various stages of life. These rituals are the result of time-honoured customs, regulating a Jew's life from birth to burial. One thing is striking, viz: how these high-points in Jewish life are not merely a matter of personal experience but are shared by the whole community.

Part IV explores "the cycle of the Jewish Year", the religious holy days, their meaning and celebration. In this section some topics, it seems to me, deserved a slightly more developed description.

The book ends with a selected bibliography which includes some studies on Jesus and Christianity as seen by Jewish scholars. One wonders why works like *Ancient Israel* by R. de Vaux, or *The Spirituality of Judaism* by Le Déaut-Jaubert-Hruby (see VIDYAJYOTI 1978, pp. 233f) and other such works by non-Jewish authors are not included.

The book gives a good, concise introduction to the study of Judaism. The approach is descriptive more than critical or theological.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

Comparative Religion. Edited by Amarjit SINGH SETHI and Reinhard PUMMER. *New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House*, 1979. Pp. xvi-200. Rs 60.

As is said in the Foreword, "the book makes no pretensions of new or profound scholarship, but is designed to make possible for interested lay readers to share

the insights of others, each associated with one particular religion in a special way. It should be of assistance in what Paul VI termed 'the search for an adequate understanding of the deepest mysteries that surround human existence', for the understanding of other religions is likely to shed new light on one's own" (p. IX). The book contains 12 contributions presented at inter-faith meetings in Canada, the main purpose of which was to come to know one another better. The essays are not necessarily written by experts, and are of unequal value. The introductory study deals quite competently with comparative religion and ways of dialogue between various faiths. The two essays on Yoga are technical, informative, but inconclusive, the second stretching the meaning of the term Yoga to include techniques for inter-personal relationships and emotional development. Other religions explained are Judaism, Christianity and specifically the Quakers, Islam, Sikhism and the Baha'i faith. The last two essays search for a universal religion through some form of syncretism — an effort often made in the past, which in this century turns out to be somewhat atheistic. The editors and publisher are to be congratulated for making these papers available to a larger public.

G. GISPERT-SAUCH, S.J.

The Fundamentals of Buddhism. By Moti Lal PANDIT. Delhi, ISPCK, 1979. Pp. x-84. Rs 12.

A lot of information is packed in these few pages which can serve as an introduction to the basic tenets and history of Buddhism. The booklet gives us a fair first acquaintance with some of the technical terms of Buddhist thought as they have emerged through many centuries. It will probably lead to further reading for which a short bibliography is supplied. Perhaps some harsh expressions about the Buddha and unfavorable evaluation from the Christian angle (mostly in the Appendix) could be softened and complemented with a more positive sympathy.

G.G.-S

Autobiographical

Second Fiddle: Recollections and Reflections. By Norman GOODALL. London, SPCK, 1979. Pp. viii-168. £ 4.25.

This autobiographical sketch, and its subject-author, grow upon you. At first Goodall, who admits that his main intention in writing the book is to thank the many people who have joined him in roles of various distinction (he refers to himself as "second fiddle") in the unfinished symphony of the Lord's work, comes across as something of a stodgy name-dropper whose anecdotes, while pleasant enough, are of a different time and place. But then, just as the Indian reader might be about to give up, chapter four arrives, which introduces the work of Goodall as Secretary of the London Mission Society, with his first "tour" taking him to India. Not only are we treated to some personal reminiscences of Gandhi, Tagore, Ambedkar, Rajaji and Netaji, but we have a chance to compare missionary approaches now with those then, a decade before independence, when Christianity was looked upon by most Indians as inseparably united to the *raj*. 'Alienation' is a word become familiar to a later generation, but there is a haunting reminder of it even in the thirties.

The rest of the book traces the author's (and the LMS') journey through the International Missionary Council to the World Council of Churches, of which Goodall served as Assistant General Secretary, 1961-63. The origins of the ecumenical movement were very closely connected with the missionary efforts of the various Protestant Churches: "It was inevitable that the scandal of disunity should have been most glaringly apparent on those frontiers where emissaries of Christ were trying to testify convincingly to the reconciling and unifying power of the Gospel" (p. 68). Goodall's active ministry, begun shortly after World War I, also reveals the dependence, until recently, of the Church's missionary and ecumenical efforts upon political events in Europe. Towards the end of his career, he sees the focus shifting eastward and southward, to the Middle East and to Africa. We can foresee already a shift even further eastward. The author, with the wisdom of experience, poses more questions than answers about the future, namely on the role of the emerging Churches of the third world, the impact of secularisation on the Churches of the west, and the revival of traditional religiosity.

If you are anything like myself, you will probably have warmed up to the author towards the end of the book. Humility is refreshing, his openness a challenge to us, his search for unity in

diversity genuine. He comes across as a very catholic Christian: "I am not sure whether my Roman pilgrimage (teaching in Catholic universities on the ecumenical movement) has made me a Catholic Protestant or a Protestant Catholic. I hope it has made me a better Christian. If it has, it is because through all the privileges I have acknowledged in this chapter I have learned more of the grace which is heart-breaking and heart-mending and through which we have all been made blood-brothers at the cross of Christ" (p. 147).

J. CURRIE, S.J.

A Backdoor to Heaven. By Lionel BLUE. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979. Pp. 120. £ 3.95. (Available from Examiner Press Bookshop, 35 Dalal Street, Bombay 400023.)

An unconventional Rabbi shares his unusual experiences of religion. It is a story of a seed of faith which became rooted in an open and alert mind and grew up into a vigorous tree. From early years, the author was exposed to the most varied experiences of the Jewish Ghetto in Central Europe, the more liberal atmosphere of Jewry in English suburbia, to Western Christianity, Marxism, Freudism, Hinduism and even the vulgarities of seedy areas in London and Amsterdam. Most of the episodes he relates in a witty and cutting style seem to have little to do with religion in the conventional sense. But at every turn grace seems to seep through ungraceful events. The point that the author wants to make in these accounts and reflections is that God is not to be found only in cult or apparently good actions, but also in the complex and often ambiguous verities of life, which justifies the title *A Backdoor to Heaven*. Many of his remarks may appear shocking or even sacrilegious; but they are not meant to condemn genuine belief and acts of worship but rather the hypocrisy that underlies much of conventional religion.

This is strong meat, although served in an attractive form. It is meant to shock the reader from his complacency and superficiality, and in that sense it can contribute to deepening his faith. How-

ever, at times the author is carried off by his tendency to biting sarcasm which can disturb without healing. This will happen to those who do not approach the book with the right attitude, or who may (unjustifiably) look here for a systematic exposition of the truths of religion or for clear answers to their difficulties or doubts. To the moral straggler or secret doubter—and there are more of these than the clergyman or rabbi would care to admit—the book will open new vistas of faith. To the pious it can reveal new dimensions of genuine religion.

G. LOBO, S.J.

From Anxiety to Releasement in Martin Heidegger's Thought. By Joseph MANIKATH. Bangalore, Asian Trading Corporation, 1978. Pp. 58. Rs 8.

This booklet is the fruit of a post-doctoral research at Louvain and Pittsburgh Universities by Fr J. Manikath, Professor at St Thomas Seminary, Kottayam. It studies "the role of man in the act of thinking on Being" in Heidegger's work. The author stresses particularly the passage from the first to the second phase of Heidegger's search for being: from an emphasis on man (*Dasein*) to a stress on Being (*Sein*) and hence, from the anxiety of "care" to "releasement".

The work is difficult reading for the "layman", especially the parts where the author follows and explains Heidegger's hermetic and untraditional terminology. It is meant for initiates.

The author's erudite treatment of his subject invites to ask a crucial question which still remains open (but was not directly here the object of research): Why did Heidegger's system, which he was reluctant to call a philosophy, prevent him from recognizing God, the infinite "Being" and "Truth"? Why did he stop at the finite "Sein"? Is it for having exchanged the metaphysical "wisdom" of perennial philosophy—which he contested—for a deep but obscure experience of the self beyond all expressed thought or form? If so, the "Dasein" is self-enclosed and there is no final "releasement" from "anxiety".

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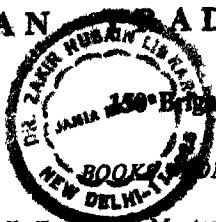
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In This Issue

When during the Second Vatican Council Pope Paul VI made his historical journey to Jerusalem, this was interpreted in the context of the Council as symbolic of the Church's return to Jesus Christ, the Lord and Saviour. The main thrust of the Council may well be described as a break with Church-centredness and a re-cenitration of the Church on her Master, on the one hand, and, on the other, on the world at whose service she is placed. No less was involved in the Council's favourite concept of the Church as sign. The implications are far-reaching, but have they changed our thinking habits? One of the implications, and not the least, is that primacy belongs to Jesus Christ, not to Christianity understood as exterior membership of the Church. Who is a Christian? asks Fr C. M. CHERIAN in his article, and answers that what matters is discipleship, whether within or outside the Christian fold. If things are seen in this fashion, many are inside who apparently seem to be outside, and vice versa. The article breeds openness to others and humility in our own Christian profession.

In an article entitled "Christians and Development in India Today", Fr W. FERNANDES traces the evolution of the Church's involvement in developmental work, from the charitable and directly pastoral and missionary approach to the present trends towards political action, conscientization and participative development. In the process he shows to what kind of critique traditional institutions need to be subjected and what counterparts are called for by the present rethinking in a new situation. The article is well documented and will, no doubt, foster reflection on a topic vital for the Church's mission.

On the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the diocese of Manila, an International Congress on Mission was held last December in Manila, Philippines, which redefined Mission in Asia for the 1980's. Fr M. AMALADOSS, a member of the Congress, reports on its achievement. It consists less in the breaking of new ground — familiar themes are repeated — than in a new sense of responsibility in the local Churches for their own mission.

Our January Editorial announced the visit of Pope John Paul II to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Istanbul. The present number gives a short account of the visit and brings out its significance for the hoped-for recovery of full communion between Western and Eastern Christianity.

Anyone Outside the Grace of Christ?

C. M. CHERIAN, S.J.

A PRAYER for evangelization, used in some parts of India, begins like this: "Lord Jesus, you gave your life on a Cross in order to bring all men back to your Father, and you commanded us to preach your Gospel to all men. But even after twenty centuries ninety eight per cent of our Indian people do not have the grace of knowing and loving you." Pope John Paul II, in his homily at Mass for World Mission Sunday, 1979, said: "Jesus is still unknown to three-quarters of mankind! The Church therefore needs so many willing missionaries, men and women, to proclaim the Gospel." Vijay Chandar, a Hindu, a movie producer, is reported to have said: "There is Christ in every man; this Christ must be brought out." Jesus Christ himself has said: "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness. . . . When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself. . . . I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me" (Jn 8: 12; 12: 32; 14: 6).

1. *The Problem*

These varied data call for some biblical theological reflection which I attempt here. Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world (Jn 4: 42). He is the true light that enlightens every man (Jn 1: 9). He, the crucified and risen Lord, God made man, is surely present to every human being. He pours out his Spirit upon everyone, and draws everyone to himself (see Acts 2: 17f). No one can attain to the truth and love of the Father apart from, and independently of, the One who is *the way, the truth and the life*. Can this universal saving action of Jesus Christ be *effective* apart from the concrete visible sensible presence and activity of the Christian Churches by which they proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ?

There is the evident fact that the Churches are not concretely and effectively present in vast areas of our world. In the history of mankind there were long ages when whole peoples were without the presence and ministry of any Christian Churches. My long pastoral experience tells me that the answer to these difficulties is not clear to the majority of the Christian faithful. I am convinced that this is

because we are not sufficiently familiar with the total evidence on this subject provided by the Bible throughout its pages. What the official documents of the Church, especially those of Vatican II, have said about this question presupposes the biblical teaching. This present article will therefore be occupied mainly with the teaching of the Bible.

2. *Light from the Bible*

The Bible teaches the truth of the presence of the God of love and salvation among *all* peoples of the world. All peoples of all time and all places have the same origin and the same destiny, namely, God himself. There is only one true God, and he is the God of all. He is present in all human beings everywhere and active within them and around them in order to bring everyone to the same goal of eternal salvation, so that deliverance from sin, suffering and death is available to every human being who opens himself or herself to God's presence and activity. In a true sense, therefore, all human beings of every creed and clime find themselves on the same footing before God. This truth can be expressed briefly in the biblical statement: "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10: 34; Rom 2: 11).

The very first book of the Bible, Genesis, teaches emphatically that God is the Creator and Saviour of *all* peoples. From the very beginning of human history God had the same plan of salvation for all mankind. The Adamic Covenant and the Noahic Covenant long preceded the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants, and all these Covenants were anticipations of God's New Covenant realized in Jesus Christ. In fact God's Covenant-plan embraces not only all human beings but also all creation, animate and inanimate (Gen 9: 13; Sir 17: 12; Rom 8: 19ff).

The Genesis view is that, even when human beings proved unfaithful and failed to cooperate with God's plan, he has remained absolutely faithful; he has not changed his plan. Therefore his effective offer of salvation to every human being continues. Where sin abounded, grace and redemption super-abounded (Rom 5: 20). Accordingly, after the original fall, the promise of the Saviour of all mankind was made to the first human beings and to all their descendants. It follows that God, who is Father, Son and Spirit, has been fully active in our fallen world, carrying out the divine work of redemption in every generation of mankind. Thus, for instance, according to Gen 5: 21ff, Enoch, an ancestor of Noah, was so intimate with God that God assumed him into heaven without his having to pass through the common experience of death (see Heb 11: 5). Sirach describes Enoch as "an example of repentance to all generations" (44: 16).

What are the theological implications of this affirmation of the full availability of salvation, of eternal glory, to an individual who lived long before any Church existed ?

3. The Universal Significance of the Call of Abraham

It is against this background of God's universal will of salvation and his universal saving activity that the meaning of the special election of Abraham and of the Israelite people, and also of the coming of Jesus Christ, must be understood. Abraham was chosen that he might be a source of blessing to all the families of the earth (Gen 12: 3). In the line of his descendants One was to appear who is unique — the Saviour of the world.

It is very remarkable that Paul calls Abraham "the father of all who believe", including Christians (Rom 4: 11). For Paul, Abraham is a powerful illustration of the all-important truth that a person becomes righteous in the sight of God not by reliance on anything external, however holy, but by self-commitment to God and his will. Paul insists on the fact that Abraham pleased God without belonging in any special economy of salvation. (This is because Paul was keenly conscious of the fact that his own belonging in Judaism with all its many privileges had not resulted in his justification or sanctification before his personal conversion to Christ.) Abraham lived long before God made the Sinai Covenant with Israel, and gave his Law to them through Moses. Abraham was justified even apart from the sacred sign of circumcision which the Jews made so much of.

Abraham's faith consisted primarily in his interior personal relationship with God, the relationship of loving heroic obedience to God's will. God and his will mattered much more to Abraham than home and possessions, than even his own only son whom he was ready to sacrifice if God so willed. For God's sake Abraham became a stranger and exile on the earth, looking forward to a heavenly city rather than an earthly one. So great was his hope in God that he was convinced "that God was able to raise men even from the dead". This means that he understood the mystery of death-resurrection, suffering-glory (see Rom 4: 1ff; Heb 11: 8ff).

How does such a faith compare with the Christian faith ? Did Abraham's firm self-commitment to God, his close attention to God's will, his heroic acceptance of suffering mean conformity with the Son of God who was to become man in Abraham's line ? The Bible is not silent on this point. In the Gospel of St John Jesus tells the Jews: "Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; he saw it, and was glad" (8: 56). A living relationship is affirmed

between Abraham and his privileged descendant, the Saviour who was to come. That Abraham loved God with his whole heart and placed himself at God's disposal for the accomplishment of his work of saving the world meant that Abraham foresaw and greeted with joy the Saviour whom God would send in the distant future to complete his work.

4. Why the Special Election of Israel ?

The special choice of Israel must also be understood not as an exclusive privilege bestowed on them, but as a call to serve the cause of universal salvation (see Exod 19: 4ff). What was true of the faith of Abraham was equally true of the faith of Moses. God chose him as a mediator between himself and a whole people. His prophetic ministry was to benefit not only one people but the whole world. Here was a man whom God entrusted with all his house, with whom God spoke mouth to mouth, who beheld the form of the Lord (Num 12: 7f). This man "chose rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt. He endured as seeing him who is invisible" (Heb 11: 25ff).

This means that Moses understood and lived the mystery of the Cross of Christ. All the prophets understood that they could not share in God's work of redeeming our sinful world if they were not ready to suffer even unto death. It is the Spirit of Christ within them who taught them to penetrate the mystery of the sufferings of the Saviour and his subsequent glory (1 Pet 1: 10f). The prophets and psalmists and wise men of the Old Testament were taught by the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, not only to believe in the future coming of the Saviour but also to become like him in their own persons and lives. All this points to a conclusion. To be taught by the Spirit of God is to become God-like. To be God-like is to be Christ-like. To be Christ-like is to understand and to live the mystery of suffering-glory. Such Christ-likeness can be attributed to the saints of every age from Abel onwards (see Heb 11: 4).

5. The Universalism of the Old Testament

The prophets understood that God was occupied not simply with the redemption of Israel but with that of all peoples. The Saviour who was to appear in Israel would bring forth salvation to all the nations who were waiting for him. He would establish God's reign not only in Israel but on the whole earth (Is 42: 1ff). God's plan was to send the Saviour "as a light to the nations" that his salvation might

reach to the end of the earth (Is 49: 6). All flesh would experience God's glory (Is 40: 5). The Christ of God would startle many nations; their kings would shut their mouths because of him. They would understand that the Righteous One was wounded and suffered for the sins of all. Bearing the sins of the whole multitude of mankind, he would make them to be accounted righteous before God (Is 52: 13-53: 12; see Lk 2: 30ff).

Israel understood that the whole world and all its inhabitants belong to God (Exod 19: 5; Ps 24: 1). It is the same transcendent God who governs the destinies of all peoples, who gave them their separate inheritance, and fixed their bounds (Deut 32: 8). Jerusalem was the religious capital, not only of Palestine, but of the whole world. God's plan was, not simply to gather and teach and unite one people, but all peoples. His plan was all-embracing (Is 2: 2ff). Not only Israel, but Egypt and Assyria also were God's people (Is 19: 24f). The same God who led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt into the freedom of the Promised Land guided the destinies of the Ethiopians and the Philistines and the Syrians (Amos 9: 7; Acts 17: 26). God is the all-seeing Judge of all peoples (Amos 1-2).

Genesis 3: 15 which promises the Saviour to the whole human family has been called the First Gospel (*protoevangelium*), the clear announcement of the Good News of God's unbounded love which overcomes all sin and extends salvation to all. There is a whole book in the Old Testament which can be called the Gospel before the New Testament Gospels—the Book of Jonah. This book was written with the set purpose of correcting the narrowness and exclusivism and fanaticism of contemporary Jews, living in the post-exilic period, who tended to imagine that they were the sole object of God's love and choice, his bounty and saving action. The book exposes the ridiculousness of such a narrow idea of God, showing how grossly mistaken Jews could be when they thought of themselves as better and more enlightened than their Gentile neighbours. Those whom they despised as pagans could be really God-fearing people who were more open to God's action in their lives than many a complacent Jewish believer.

The forceful lesson of this book is that, when so-called believers did not understand and share God's infinite love and active concern and saving action for *all* peoples including "unbelievers", it is the wisdom and spirit of such believers that is open to question. The truth is that God's infinite love extends not only to every single human being but also to all cattle, all his handiwork. It is beyond the slightest doubt that God is calling all peoples to repentance and conversion,

and his purpose is to save all, and not to destroy (see Wis 1: 13f; 11: 21ff). The message of this book is as relevant for us Christians today as it was for the post-exilic Jewish community.

6. *The Universalistic Insight of the Wisdom Books*

In the Old Testament this universalistic insight is clearest in the Wisdom books. The voice of God's wisdom is addressed to *all* human beings *through the whole of creation and history* (Prov 1: 20f; 8: 1f; Sir 4: 11f; 24: 1f; Wis 6: 12-9: 18). This voice can be heard and responded to by everyone. "The Spirit of the Lord has filled the world. . . . You are merciful to all, for you can do all things; and you overlook men's sins that they may repent" (Wis 1: 7; 11: 23). It is significant that the Book of Wisdom, written in the first century before Christ by a Jewish author living outside Palestine among non-Jews, shows a specially deep understanding of God's saving action among all peoples. From the unity of God, the unity of mankind and the unity of God's plan of salvation, it follows that God is savingly present to *all* human beings, giving them the capacity to respond to him, and to be saved, and that no one can be lost except by a deliberate refusal of God's grace.

"The heavens are telling the glory of God" (Ps 19: 1). God created the material world for human beings; he created them for himself. God's purpose for the innumerable wonderful things that constitute our world is that they should all speak to us of his infinite love, power and benevolence. They are signs and symbols of his loving care and concern for all mankind. Through his many gifts of creation he is saying to each human being: "See, what I have made and done for you out of my love and concern." So all Nature is bringing to each human heart a constant message of God's loving care. Psalm 19 speaks of this message about God and his love as resounding through all the earth, day and night, reaching every corner of the world. This means that even material creation is not religiously neutral. All of it is endowed with a revelatory, saving significance. All creation is a wordless but eloquent proclamation of the truth of God's love and invitation for those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand. The whole world is a transparent medium reflecting God's truth and love.

If so, it is wrong for any human being to pretend that the Good News of God's love and care has not been communicated to him or her. The communication is taking place all the time. If it is not understood, there is question of our turning a deaf ear to it, hardening our hearts against it (see Rom 1: 18ff; 10: 16ff). To lose sight of this

cosmic dimension of Gospel proclamation, and to restrict it to the missionary activity of the Christian Churches would be a serious mistake.

7. Paul's Interiority, Personalism and Universalism

This view is confirmed by the greatest theologian among the sacred authors of the New Testament, St Paul. In a singularly powerful passage (Romans 2) Paul attacks the complacency of Jewish believers who are ready to condemn non-Jews as unbelievers and evil-doers. What Paul says here applies equally to Christians in relation to "non-Christians". He points out that God's law of truth and love is written on every human heart. On the last day all peoples will be judged, not by the creed they professed but by the life they lived. "God will render to every man according to his works." The basis of judgment will be the very same in regard to all: whether we have obeyed or not obeyed God's law of love written on every human heart by the Holy Spirit.

Our understanding of Baptism can be very superficial. The important question is: Who is baptized in the sight of God? Receiving the sacrament of Baptism involves the responsibility to realize its meaning in one's everyday life. The inner meaning of Baptism is purification by the Spirit, transformation into Christlikeness, sonship of the heavenly Father. This meaning is not realized in regard to the adult Christian who does not obey the law of God in serious matters, and is not disposed to amend his or her life. Such a one is outwardly Christian, but not inwardly. This does not seem to be a rare case. It is incorrect therefore to suppose that Christian communities as a whole are characterized by the grace of knowing and loving God. As everybody knows, people finding themselves within the visible Christian communities is most frequently an accident of birth and upbringing. No one becomes a real Christian without a personal conversion and serious cooperation with God's grace in Jesus Christ. This cooperation and the Christlikeness conditioned by it are not to be taken for granted (see Mt 7: 21f).

But the so-called pagan who obeys the law of God is inwardly Christian, though not outwardly. Obeying the law of God, the law of truth and love, necessarily presupposes purification by God's Spirit and transformation into Christlikeness or divine sonship. The Spirit blows where he wills (Jn 3: 8), not only within the confines of the visible Churches. We need to remember that God is present, Christ is present, the Spirit is present even where no Christian missionary has yet penetrated, among Tibetans and Eskimos, for instance.

The supreme evangelist and missionary is Jesus Christ himself, sent by the Father into the world to become one with us, to teach and to convert us, and to lead us back to the Father. All the time he is actively engaged in his universal work of redemption, manifesting himself through the whole of the created world which exists in him and for him, and through all those good people who surrender themselves to him anywhere, and are ready to become his agents, messengers of the Good News of God's love.

The task of mediation between the invisible Christ and the unbelieving world may not be thought of as the monopoly of members of the visible Churches. On one occasion Jesus corrected the narrowness of his disciples, and said to them: "He that is not against us is for us" (Mk 9: 40). Christ himself is the Good News, announcing himself before the whole world all the time, the Word and Voice of the Father addressed to every human heart, calling us all to repentance and renewal through his constant gift of the Spirit in our hearts and *through all that he does for us* in the whole of this created world. He does good to everyone everywhere, gives us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying our hearts with food and gladness (see Acts 14: 17). Our institutional preoccupations may not make us lose sight of this inwardness and depth and height and length and width of our Christian faith.

8. *Jesus' Fight against Narrowness and Self-Complacency*

We understand all this with greater clarity when we look at the Jesus of the Gospels and listen to him in our hearts. He came to interiorise and personalise religion, to teach us not to trust in externals. He taught the religion of the heart, the heart purified and renewed. In this his teaching was in perfect continuity with that of the prophets who were tireless in pointing out that true religion is more than conformity with an established way of life, more than fidelity to ritual observances, that it is nothing less than total self-commitment to the all-holy One. In fact, this can be said to be *the* lesson of the Old Testament: religious institutions, however holy or numerous, do not guarantee the holiness of the people who have recourse to them; nothing can purify a people except their receiving in themselves the action of God's Spirit (Jer 31: 33f; Ezek 36: 26f; Rom 9: 4f). Jesus confirmed this teaching, and pointed out to the people that the externals of religion are meaningless when they are divorced from personal assimilation to God manifested in a new quality of life. "You outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt 23: 28).

Jesus mercilessly exposed the emptiness of the religion of many of his fellow countrymen who nevertheless gloried in being the children of Abraham, the followers of Moses, the keepers of the Law (Jn 8). Jesus agreed with Isaiah the prophet who accused his own people of honouring God with their lips while their hearts were far from him (Mt 15: 8). It is doubtful whether Christian pastors and leaders today follow the example of the prophets who taught their people to see themselves as God saw them, and thus to avoid the pitfall of a dangerous self-complacency.

On the other hand, Jesus fully recognized the fact that, outside the fold of Israel, in spite of the paucity of special divine aids to salvation, there were men and women who were open to God's action within them, and who therefore were truly godly. Thus he once admired and praised the humility and simplicity of a Roman centurion, a non-Jew, and said of him: "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith" (Mt 8: 10). He went on to say that many who were outside the "chosen community" of Israel really belonged in the Kingdom of God, while many inside would be judged unworthy. Similarly Jesus demonstrated to his disciples how wonderfully humble and trustful a non-Jewish Canaanite woman was, and said to her: "O woman, how great is your faith ! Be it done for you as you desire" (Mt 15: 28).

Jesus told the Jews openly that the pagan cities of Tyre and Sidon and Sodom could have been more pleasing to God than Jewish cities like Bethsaida, Capernaum and Chorozin which were so slow in responding to the call of God's grace (Mt 10: 20ff). He also told them that so many heathen individuals like the poor widow of Zarephath and Naaman the Syrian could be more pleasing to God than those who gloried in being the people of God (Lk 4: 25ff). Jesus did not hesitate to tell Jews who prided themselves on their knowledge of the Scriptures and their strict religious observance that they did not know God, that they were insensitive to God's inner voice, that they did not have God's word abiding in them, that they did not have the love of God within them, that their religion was a matter of self-pleasing and receiving glory from one another (Jn 5: 37ff).

9. *Who Knows and Loves Jesus Christ ?*

The fact is that so often our idea of the knowledge of Jesus Christ is intellectualized and externalized. It is wrong for me to suppose that I really know Jesus Christ because I have information about the historical Jesus, or because I have accepted with my mind the teachings of the Church about God, about Christ, or because I follow the

observances and practices of the Catholic or Christian life. All this is not sufficiently personal. Jesus' invitation to each one is: "Follow me." To follow Jesus means loving him with one's whole heart, committing oneself to him unreservedly and wholeheartedly, and living one's whole daily life in him and through his Spirit. Jesus has said: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (Jn 14: 15). The only test of true knowledge of Jesus Christ is whether a person carries out in his or her life Jesus' new commandment of love. "He who says, 'I know him', but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 Jn 2: 4).

Who are Christians by this standard ? Any human being anywhere in the world who obeys the Spirit of Christ, freely bestowed on everyone, who is humble, simple, and teachable like the Samaritan woman, Zacchaeus or the other "little ones" who came to Jesus, who overcomes sin in the power of the Spirit, who understands that life in this world is completely meaningful because it is meant to be motivated and impregnated with love of God and love of people, who accepts the cross of life in this sinful world in a spirit of patience and hope, any one who overcomes jealousy, arrogance, irritability and resentment, who does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right, who bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, is inwardly Christian (see 1 Cor 13: 4ff). This is not the exclusive privilege of members of the visible Christian Churches.

"As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Mt 25: 40). Here Christ teaches that all those who have loved and served *any* person in need have loved and served *him* because all belong to him and are objects of his own love and ceaseless concern. "Christ is all, and in all" (Col 3: 11). The true Christian is whoever shares in Jesus' universal love and concern. Do I pass this test because I am a member of the visible Christian Church ? Do others necessarily fail because they are outside the fold of the visible Church ?

10. *The Church's Traditional View, Ancient and Modern*

Some readers may be wondering whether what we are saying agrees with the traditional teaching of the Church. Here are two quotations from a Christian apologist of the second century, St Justin Martyr:

Christ is the first-begotten of God, his Word of whom all mankind partakes Those who have lived by the Word are Christians, even though they have been considered atheists: such as, among the Greeks, Socrates, Heraclitus, and others like them; and among the foreigners, Abraham, Elias, Ananias, Azarias, Mishael and many others So also those who lived before Christ and did not live by the Word were useless men, enemies of Christ, and murderers of those who did live by the Word. But those who have lived by the Word and still do are Christians, and are fearless and untroubled (I *Apology*, 46).

Christ, of whom Socrates had a partial knowledge (for he was and is the Word who is in every person and who predicted things to come first through the prophets and then in person when he assumed our human nature and feelings, and taught us these doctrines), convinced not only the philosophers and scholars, but also workmen and men wholly uneducated, who all scorned glory and fear and death; for he was the Power of the ineffable Father, not a product of human reason (2 *Apology*, 10)¹

Omitting Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and others among the early Fathers who could be cited in this connexion, we add a remarkable passage from St Augustine:

The very thing which is called the Christian religion existed among the ancients, nor was it absent at the beginning of the human race, until the coming of Christ in the flesh when the true religion which had already existed began to be called Christian. Therefore if I have written: 'this is the religion which exists in our days, the Christian religion', the meaning is not that it had not existed previously, but that it took the name Christian only later (*Retractationes*, I, 13).²

For good measure a well-known passage from the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church by Vatican II:

God himself is not far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, for it is he who gives to all men life and breath and every other gift (cf. Acts 17: 25f), and who as Saviour wills that all men be saved (cf. 1 Tim 2: 4). Those also can attain to everlasting salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, yet sincerely seek God and, moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do his will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience (n. 16).

In the light of what we have seen above it is doubtfully correct to say that such people "do not know the Gospel of Christ". The Gospel is Christ himself. Does one who has been taught by the Spirit of Christ know him or not? Here the distinction between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith can help. Even those who have not heard of the Jesus of history may know the Christ of faith.

11. *Why Evangelisation ?*

These considerations usually raise a serious objection in the minds of many Christians: If everyone everywhere can become inwardly Christian by responding to the omni-present Spirit of Christ, where is the need of evangelisation and of entry into the visible Church of Christ? The difficulty occurs on the level of abstract speculation. It will disappear when the matter is reflected upon more carefully. The fact that salvation is available to everyone through the saving presence and activity of God in Christ does not mean that all are already

1. Both passages are cited by J. DUPUIS in his book *Jesus Christ and His Spirit*, p. 7.
2. Cited by J. DUPUIS, *ibid.*, p. 19.

responding and on the way to salvation. There is the terrible mystery of the sin of the world, of wide-spread ignorance of God, of spiritual deafness and blindness, of wilful resistance to God on the part of individuals and groups.

So many are still groping in darkness, without the knowledge of salvation (see Lk 1: 76ff). The Son of God was not content to remain invisible, and to act from heaven: he emptied himself, took the form of a servant, and became obedient to the point of dying for us on the cross, so that he might approach us in a human way adapted to our condition.

Jesus Christ founded the Church so that we might continue his mission in this world *in the incarnational way*. The Church has no meaning apart from her mission. "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (1 Cor 9: 16). But obviously she cannot carry out her mission unless she herself is evangelised, unless she embodies the Good News in her own life and activity, personal and collective. The Good News is that God is calling everyone and offering everyone total liberation in his Son Jesus Christ, through his gift of the Holy Spirit, through his free gifts of holiness, wisdom, strength and courage. Have Church members already understood this Good News, attained liberation and become holy, wise, strong and courageous, so that they can be witnesses of the crucified and glorified Lord Jesus and faithful bearers of his universal love and concern? The real question is not whether evangelisation is needed, but whether the Churches are ready for the task.

Jesus wanted his Church community to expand and to embrace all peoples so that there would be one flock and one shepherd (Jn 10: 16). He came to gather into one the dispersed children of God (Jn 11: 52). He prayed that all might become perfectly one even as he and the Father are one, that all might be in him and he in us, so that there would be no more divisions and conflicts among God's people (Jn 17: 20ff). How far we are from approximating to this ideal Jesus has set before us! So there is no justification for complacency or inactivity. If we shared the mind of Christ, we would also wish that all might belong in the one united community of Christ (see Acts 26: 29).

The question that the visible Churches of Christ ought to ponder is this: If many good, God-fearing, truth-seeking people outside are not likely to feel at home within the Christian Churches as they are at present, whose fault is it: theirs or ours? Are we such that outsiders would be attracted, and would wish to belong among us (see Rom 2: 24.27)? Rather, do they not often think of us as infected with

arrogance, exclusiveness, superiority complex? Are we truly recognisable as disciples of Christ?

This is how an outsider sees the problem: "Why does believing in Christ have to mean belonging to the (which) Church? What Christianity or which Church do you want me to join? Lutheran? Baptist? Church of South India? Roman Catholic?" (Vijay Chandar). Citing this, the author of an article in a Christian journal remarks that the Indian Church, like many others, is replete with different varieties of Christianity like the market is flooded with different brands of cigarettes. These different denominations are an embarrassment to Christians themselves, and an enigma to people of other faiths who are unable to judge between them. They deplore the in-fighting that goes on among the established Churches.

12. Conclusion

No one can proclaim God adequately in our world, in human society except God himself (see Exod 34: 6). Knowing God or Christ can never be a matter of man teaching man (Jer 31: 34). Whether our missionaries, in their commendable zeal for the spread of Christianity, have in the past borne this in mind, is highly doubtful. No one becomes a Christian without a personal turning to God in true sorrow for all past wrongdoing and the earnest desire of a new life conformed to the Spirit of Christ. All this is the gift of God to persons who open themselves to his saving action in Christ through the Spirit. This action is absolutely universal. In the first place, Gospel proclamation is God's own prerogative, which nobody can arrogate to himself.

The missionary activity of the Church must be a humble service of this divine activity of proclamation, a service offered to God and people in union with Christ and the Holy Spirit. What is decisive in the matter of listening to the Gospel proclamation and responding to it are simplicity, humility, self-abnegation and a sincere ardent love of truth on the part of the human person. Obviously these are not the privileged possession of the Christian Churches or of any other group. Hence we may not think of the boundaries of the Churches of Christ as well-defined. How many members of the visible Churches have personally responded to the Gospel proclamation and translated the Gospel into their personal and social life, so that they can claim true knowledge of Christ? This is a secret known only to God. How many outside the visible Churches qualify here is equally God's secret. Who outnumber whom?

We will let St Paul have the last word: "Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written: 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God'. So each of us shall give account of himself to God. Then let us no more pass judgment on one another" (Rom 14: 10f). A sound but sadly neglected principle of the widest ecumenism that God demands from his Church.

Christians and Development in India Today

Walter FERNANDES, S.J.*

THE present stage of development work by the Indian Church can best be characterised as experimental. After passing through what can be called strictly pastoral, institutional and economical phases, many development workers are beginning to question some assumptions on which socio-economic planning in the Indian Church and in the country as a whole was based. Many of them feel that the strategy based on these assumptions has not been very effective and that its benefits have not reached the most disinherited groups.

Most of those who question these assumptions are fully aware that they do not have all the answers. They only know that they should experiment with innovative approaches in order to help the underprivileged and the marginalised to benefit from the developmental process. Another feature of the experimental stage is the active involvement of the laity.

After a bird's eye view of the historical background that has culminated in the present re-thinking, this paper will try to study the main features of the present experimental period. It will then discuss the implications of these changes.

The Historical Background

Initially the 19th century missionary took a purely pastoral approach to development. He got involved in education with the hope that the upper castes would be converted after getting knowledge of the Christian truths. Slowly however, those involved in schools

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realised that not many conversions could be expected from among the upper castes, that they were mostly educating future administrators. But they were convinced that the links of the bureaucrats with the Catholic institutions would give the Church the influence it required to make sure that the "British Protestant" government did not initiate policies that were harmful to Catholics.¹

However, the main purpose of their presence in India was conversion work taken in its strict sense, i.e., baptism. Once they realised that the schools could at best create a climate favourable to evangelisation, the missionaries moved out to the poorest section of Indian society who were more amenable to their message. Often their first contact with the rural areas where they started their evangelical work was during famines or epidemics which were not uncommon amid the socio-economic and other changes introduced by colonialism. Ordinarily the missionaries got involved in relief work, opened orphanages for the survivors of famine and dispensaries during epidemics. Often these relief centres became a more or less permanent part of their work.² Moreover, the dispensaries and primary schools were required to cater to the needs of the Christians. This double involvement in education and missionary work led to the growth of the institutions.

The Institutional Age

Between 1901 and 1947, the number of hospitals had increased from 10 to 53 (430%), dispensaries from 16 to 157 (881%), leprosy centres from 3 to 11 (267%), homes for the aged from 16 to 58 (263%) and homes for the destitute from 9 to 17 (89%). The educational institutions, except the primary schools mostly in the mission centres, had shown a very small increase during these 47 years. The situation changed considerably during the decade after independence, which can be called the institutional age. All these institutions grew at a very fast rate, especially those of the higher type, i.e., hospitals and dispensaries among the charitable institutions, and high schools and university colleges among the educational institutions.

1. G. A. ODDIE, *Social Movements in India—British Protestant Missionaries and Social Reforms 1850-1900*, Delhi, Manohar Book Service, 1978, pp. 23ff.

2. Julien LAUNAY, *Histoire des missions des Indes*, Paris, Paris Foreign Missionaries, 1896, Tome IV, pp. 4-7.

Table 1: Growth of Catholic Institutions in India: 1948-1976³

Year	Hospitals (Index)	Dispensaries (Index)	Aged Home (Index)	Leprosy (Index)	Destitute ¹ (Index)
1948	53 (100)	157 (100)	58 (100)	11 (100)	17 (100)
1958	119 (224)	473 (301)	75 (129)	10 (91)	20 (113)
1968	228 (543)	629 (401)	76 (131)	36 (327)	19 (112)
1976	508 (958)	1068 (680)	135 (233)	85* (773)	47+ (276)

Table 1 (Cont.)

Year	Prim. Sch (Index)	Students (Index)	High Sch (Index)	Students (Index)	Univ. Col (Index)	Students (Index)
1948	4096 (100)	319700 (100)	1525 (100)	419226 (100)	30 (100)	14849 (100)
1968	4877 (119)	633000 (198)	2196 (144)	713000 (170)	78 (260)	56612 (381)
1976	5176 (126)	1320377 (315)	3886 (189)	1748838 (417)	130 (433)	135068 (910)

3. Sources: François HOUTART, *The Catholic Hospital System in India*, Bombay, Shaktantala Publishing House, 1979, Table 1 pp. 5-6; R. D. N. DICKINSON, *The Christian College in Developing India*, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 258; T. POTHACAMURY, *The Church in Independent India*, Bombay, The Examiner Press, 1961, p. 146; *The Catholic Directory of India*, New Delhi, CBCI Centre, 1977.

*The sudden rise is accounted for by a group in Jamshedpur which has started a massive leprosy prevention programme.

+The new houses are mainly of Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity.

What the above table shows is that the various phases overlap. The impetus given to institutional expansion immediately after independence still continues, but its main inspiration and assumptions belong to the 1950's. Since literacy was only 14% at independence and the death rate was nearly 50 per 1000, the five year plans since 1951 as well as the decision-makers in the Church assumed that the best solution was to open institutions — schools for education, and dispensaries and hospitals for health care. The Western standards were taken as the norm in this decade of optimism about development and it was hoped that the introduction of sophisticated technology would result in economic growth, more jobs and social change geared to industrial revolution. The progress in the West was attributed exclusively to technology. The fact that this development would not have been possible without the economic exploitation of the colonies was forgotten.

In this optimistic climate, the Church leaders too assumed that the institutions were the best mode of serving the country and of bearing witness to the message of Christ. The 1950 plenary Council of the Catholic hierarchy for example called on all Christians to support these institutions as part of their fidelity to the Gospel message.⁴

The growth of the institutions in the 1970's is to a great extent the continuation of this momentum. Many primary schools had been up-graded to high schools during the decade after independence. The students who came out of them had to enter university colleges in the 1960's and 70's. Hence one notices a sudden spurt in the number of Church related university colleges. Similarly, hospitals were still viewed as a good solution to the health problems and many dispensaries were up-graded. While granting that these institutions have done much good to the country and the Church, today many question the assumption on which they are based.

Some analysts attribute the growth of educational institutions also to the minority attitude of the Church and the sense of insecurity existing at the time of independence. Rightly or wrongly, the freedom fighters whose movement was accompanied by a religious and cultural revival accused the Christians and their schools (a very big number of them frequented by the upper classes) of being agents of a foreign culture, and some even thought of them as collaborators of the colonialists. Besides, the missionaries were sometimes accused of using the charitable institutions as material enticement to convert the poor. Some leaders stated that, if the masses were to be educated, the

4. *Acta et Decreta Primi Concilii Plenarii Indiae* (1950), Ranchi, Catholic Press, 1951, Decrees 153 (1), 181, 182, 185.

educational institutions had to be taken out of private hands that had catered only to an elite.

This led to a sense of insecurity. Besides, in the context of communal tension, and the fact that at least the Muslims had become strong enough to demand a country of their own, most national leaders opposed conversion for fear that some other community would acquire similar strength. They felt that all efforts should be made to safeguard communal harmony in India's pluralistic context, and that conversion work led to tension and competition between religious groups and should be discouraged.⁵

In this situation, many Christian leaders who felt threatened, thought that their security required the co-operation of the dominant elements of the Hindu society, and opened schools destined for them, especially in the state capitals and in the industrial cities of the North where the Church is almost non-existent. Many leaders testify to this search for security. A former secretary general of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), for example, stated that, though the schools and colleges posed a problem to the Church, they were necessary in order to have the influence required for the security of the Christians in a Hindu-majority land.⁶ Similar statements of other Catholics leaders and articles in the weeklies and reviews also attest to this feeling.

Others attribute the growth of women's colleges also to the increase in the number of religious personnel, especially women. Because of the restrictions posed by religious life, many avenues open to other educated women were closed to the sisters. Educational institutions were among the few places where they could work, and they did not hesitate to open more of them to cater to the demands, both from Christians and non-Christians, since personnel was somewhat easily available.⁷

The Economic Stage

The 1960's witnessed the involvement of many Church-related institutions in socio-economic projects. Unlike the religious women who worked mostly in institutions such as dispensaries and schools, the priests in the rural areas had lived through a different set of experiences during the 1950's. The cultural revival that accompanied independence had sometimes taken a religious complexion. Many

5. Government of India, *Constituent Assembly Debates* (1947-49), Vol. VII, pp. 834ff.

6. Thomas POTHACAMURY, *The Church in Independent India*, pp. 110.

7. R. D. N. DICKINSON, *The Christian College in Developing India*, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 78.

allegations were made about the missionaries using foreign money to convert the poor through material inducements. Two States had appointed official commissions to inquire into missionary methods. As a result a sense of uncertainty about direct evangelisation had set into the Church.

Moreover, the Christian-charitable activities were by and large welfare-oriented. This was possible as long as there was a relatively large number of foreign personnel who could get somewhat large donations from their friends abroad. Their Indian counterparts on the contrary who did not have such contacts had to get funds from the aid-giving agencies that gave donations for specific programmes, not what could be called "free" missionary gifts for unspecified purposes.

These factors led to a certain amount of questioning and reflection among priests, especially the religious, as can be seen from the Catholic reviews that carried many articles discussing the relationship between development and evangelisation. Those in the mission stations lived amid rural poverty, especially of the recent converts, most of whom belonged to the disinherited groups. They felt the need of doing something to improve their economic well-being, but were not certain whether they should dissociate their social work from, or associate it with their evangelical ministry.⁸ One cannot say with any amount of certainty that the debate has ended even today. This ambiguity can be seen in the Roman documents as well as other conferences, such as the Church in India Seminar (1969), the International Theological Conference at Nagpur (1971), the Consultation on Evangelisation (1973) and others.⁹

Thus during the 1960's a relatively large number of priests, particularly those in the mission stations, got involved in social work in a big way. Though direct evangelisation continued, it was on a smaller scale than during the preceding decades. The pastoral clergy by and large felt that they can bear witness to the Christian message by getting involved in socio-economic development.¹⁰

Most of these development projects took economic growth as the criterion of success. Technology, required to improve output and to increase the income of individuals or families, was introduced, and

8. ANTO KAROKARAN, *Evangelization and Diakonia*, Bangalore, Dharmaram Publications, 1978, pp. 78-79.

9. Bishop J. R. RODERICKS, Keynote Address, *Light and Life We Seek to Share — All India Consultation on Evangelization* (Patna 1973), Bangalore, 1973, p. 4.

10. There are a few important exceptions to this debate. In places like Chotanagpur in Bihar, the Church was very much identified with the tribals and development had formed part of their Church organization for nearly a century of Christianity in the region. Hence there was very little discussion on the link between evangelization and development. The two went hand in hand.

investment was mostly in these inputs. Moreover, by and large the beneficiaries were Christians for the projects were often organised by the pastoral clergy as part of their ministry. Even those who felt that the benefits of development should not be limited to one community, hesitated to let non-Christians form part of their work, either because the Christians claimed that the money brought into the country through the Churches belonged to them or because of fear of being accused of using material inducements to convert the poor.

Besides, even while initiating economic programmes, many project sponsors failed to get out of their charity and welfare-oriented mentality. Development programmes sometimes became organised forms of doling out charity to which the recent converts had got used, instead of becoming means of making the people self-sufficient. Some studies indicate that this has in fact continued the sense of dependence among the new Christians, and has even transferred it from the landlord to the priest.¹¹

One may add that the danger of increasing such dependence is real, for nearly 50% of all projects financed are "food for work" programmes which provide relief in times of emergencies, drought and the dry season when the landless agricultural labourers have little to eat.¹² If proper care is not taken, the "beneficiaries" to whom this work is a means of survival, can be badly affected. Moreover, this dependence is not caused only by the relief programmes. Even a well-organised project can create or continue domination and dependence relations, if the project organiser acts as a middleman between the people and the financial sources, not as a catalytic agent to help the people to develop themselves.

The Present Re-thinking

The present re-thinking is the result of the realisation by at least a few of the dangers inherent to a purely technological, economic or paternalistic approach. All along these years at least a few priests and sisters have gone beyond purely "practical work" and kept reflecting on the consequences of their work. Many inputs did not bear the desired results, and the individual beneficiaries to whom grants were made in order to improve their economic condition did not always come up to the desired technical level. Most of them had so far depended on someone else for their livelihood and it was not easy for

11. See among others J. VELAMKUNNEL, "Evangelization in North Indian Mission Stations" in VIDYAJYOTI, January 1978, pp. 5-11.

12. François HOUTART et al., *The Development Projects as a Social Practice of the Catholic Church in India*, Louvain, 1976, Table 4, pp. 46-47.

them to come up to the organisational level required to plan every aspect of their new technology or trade.¹³

Consequently, towards the end of the decade most development workers realised that they had to pay greater attention to the human and organisational aspects. Many of them started organising development projects on a co-operative basis. Also the funding agencies in the West started insisting on a viable organisation to run the projects and to give them continuity, and felt that registered co-operatives were the best in this line. One side-effect of this approach was that the projects had to include non-Christians among their beneficiaries, since new co-operatives for one religious group are not allowed by law.

The events of these decades would catch up with socio-economic development in the 1970's. The efforts of the Christian educational institutions had produced many educated lay persons. Discussions on the Vatican II documents had made some of them aware of their role among the People of God. As a result, some lay persons started demanding their rights in the Church. As early as 1966, the Catholic weeklies' correspondence columns carried a long controversy on the role of the laity in the schools. In the early 1970's some letters to the editor in the same weeklies stated that priests were dominating the development sector and that Vatican II had given self-confidence to lay persons; they feared that social work would give a new lease of life to clericalism. The Church in India Seminar, 1969, insisted on involving everyone in the work of socio-economic progress, especially the laity, and asked the clergy only "to animate" and "inspire" the laity in carrying out their proper mission in developmental work.¹⁴

However, this discussion concerned mostly the positions of power in the major projects and control of developmental organisations that had been set up to help the funding agencies to channel the funds or to make feasibility studies of the project proposals. That in itself is not surprising for these positions involve control of the decision-making process about financing of the funds themselves. Besides, a lay person can also view them as avenues of professional promotion.

However, another much smaller group of lay persons asked more fundamental questions about the consequences of the development plans. Most of them are professionals who could have got well-paid jobs elsewhere but felt that the Indian village would never make progress unless the educated urban elite got involved in it. Very few of

13. Julian GONSALVES, "Getting Agriculture Going", in H. VOLKEN, J. GONSALVES and S. KAITHATHARA, *Moving Closer to the Rural Poor — Shared Experiences of the Mobile Orientation and Training Team*, New Delhi, Indian Social Institute, 1979, p. 36.

14. *All India Seminar — Church in India Today*, Delhi, CBCI Centre, 1969, p. 364.

them are Catholics, but some of them work in close collaboration with a few Christian agencies. Dr R. S. Arole, the best known among them, is a Protestant physician who has started a community health programme in the Jamkhed district of Maharashtra; the Ahmedabad Study Action Group (ASAG) of Gujarat, a group of architects, engineers and other professionals (all of them non-Christians) led by Mr Kirti Shah, is involved in social housing. An important ecumenical group is the Vikas Maitri of Ranchi, led by Mr Dominic Bara and other tribals. Formed as a result of a research project by the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, it is now involved in non-formal education and development projects in 156 villages.¹⁵ In some form or other, all these groups feel that left to itself the present system of development will not reach the poorest and that new experiments have to be tried out in order to bring the marginalised sections closer to progress.

Among Catholics such re-thinking goes on mostly among youth groups, such as the AICUF and YCW. To a great extent it is the result of reflection among the clergy, especially the religious. Social work involves going out of priestly and strictly Christian circles and confrontation with technology and social structures. It involves getting out of the charitable approach to enter into socio-economic organisation. With the post Vatican II climate of renewal and the unrest after two decades of development in the country, many of these priests and nuns started examining themselves on the meaning of their religious renewal. They felt that commitment to the poor had to be the fundamental aspect of this spirit.

They also knew that this commitment is not something new. The institutions and the other projects had originated as a result of the same spirit. But through events often beyond their control, their benefits had not always reached the most disinherited. Once a child reached a Christian school, it was well looked after and could hope to come up in life. But a very big percentage of the poor could not afford to send their children to school or, once admitted, they had to be withdrawn for economic or other reasons. Those in the health field felt that over 60% of the diseases treated in the hospitals and dispensaries were water-borne, result of malnutrition, unhygienic environment, etc., and that the curative approach-oriented medical system could not solve these health problems. The causes of the malady had to be attacked and the recurrence of the disease prevented. Similarly they felt that the introduction of advanced technology helped mostly those who already had something, i.e., those with a minimum of investment

15. Francis IVERN, *Chotanagpur Survey*, New Delhi, Indian Social Institute, 1968.

capacity. For example, even a small scientifically run dairy presupposed at least a small piece of land and excluded the millions of landless labourers and the poorest sections.

As a result of this ongoing reflection, these groups have realised the need of giving greater importance to the human factor, without necessarily neglecting the institutions and the technical resources which were given priority in the development field. They, the Sisters in particular, felt that they must go to the villages where the poor live, since their education has to be an integral part of development. Hence many of them now live in these areas in small groups, in order to identify themselves with the people and help them to bring themselves up.

Theologically speaking, they view this as their commitment to the Incarnate Word who became one among men and redeemed the world by becoming part of it. They view their religious life as a continuation of the life of him who gave himself up for men and did not expect men to take the first step.

Some of those who take this attitude give primary importance to structural analysis and political action. They feel that they must be sharers in the act of liberation from unjust structures, together with Christ who liberated men from enslavement. They concentrate only on human resources, and use non-formal education, leading to people's organisation, as the only mode of action. A few of them would think that confrontation between various classes is inevitable, and that the role of the voluntary agency should be that of a catalyser in the organisation of the oppressed, in their conscientisation and preparation for their role as agents of change and for political action.

Many others have "people's participation" (or what is called participative development) as the primary element of their ideology and action, and do not view confrontation as an absolute necessity, though very few exclude it totally. Their attitude is based on the assumption that the local people can deliver the goods, that human beings are the greatest resources and should be given the greatest importance. It is not merely confidence in the people's technical capabilities and efficiency, but primarily in their value as persons and in their local technology, organisations, culture, medical and other systems and their financial resources. Economic growth has often insisted upon transfer of what is called advanced technology to the poor. But often this imported technology and foreign finances supplanted local resources instead of supplementing them and rarely reached the underprivileged sections of society. A recent study shows that India's development strategy always aimed at reaching the "small man". However, in reality the "small man" reached was not the poorest but the member of the

middle class groups that were poor but grew prosperous or improved their economic position as a result of the technological and financial inputs. In the process, the distance between the cities and the villages or between the rich and poor classes in the rural areas has increased.¹⁶

These development workers feel that most projects have taken a piecemeal approach and have tried to tackle individual problems, such as education, health, the cultural, political, religious and other aspects. They find it necessary to take an integral approach and make education the main tool, thus turning development into an ongoing educational process. The economic factor must be used only as an entry point to this process. With this in view, they try to identify the rural human, organisational, technical, financial and other resources and, instead of importing external modes of behaviour and technology, to up-grade the local resources and only supplement them with external inputs.

Both these approaches essentially involve re-valorising the people, who too often have been treated only as beneficiaries — as those who receive in the form of finances, technology, etc; both view them as agents of change capable of organising themselves and of using external inputs as additional instruments of change. Failing this, development projects can only increase their dependence on the development worker without leading to genuine human growth.

Financially speaking, participative development involves using the local resources to the maximum. What the people can contribute in the form of their work and savings is given priority. They are helped to discuss and choose their own projects according to their financial possibilities, to organise themselves, to approach the governmental agencies, banks and other units, and mobilise all these resources for their own development. External resources enter the field only after the local means are exhausted to finance elements that may not be locally available. Thus participative development is based on people realising their potential for co-operation among themselves and to demand their rights; for government subsidies and bank loans are not requested as a favour but demanded as a right.

In this sense, development is understood as of people in a group and in their environment. Their capabilities to come together as a community are utilised to the maximum, and their technical and other means become the basis of social change. Dr Arole for example is convinced that the uneducated rural women are capable of diagnosing ordinary diseases, that this does not require a specialised doctor, and

16. Marcus FRANDA, *Small is Politics — Organizational Alternatives in India's Rural Development*, New Delhi, Wiley Eastern Limited, 1979.

that the village remedies and Indian medical systems which have been neglected during 150 years of colonialism need to be revalorised. The ASAG works on the assumption that the local housing culture and techniques only need to be up-graded and not replaced. Projects are no longer devised in a manner liable to increase the villager's dependence on techniques which he does not know and can only receive from an outsider, but as tools of educating and bringing the whole community together.¹⁷ In other words, community building is the ultimate goal, and all projects are used as entry points to this educational process.

Though the participative approach does not directly come face to face with the social structures as those involved in political action do, sooner or later they have to come in contact with them in some of their elements and change their strategy accordingly. The Don Bosco Social Service Society (DBSSS) of Madras, for example, started with a charitable approach and slowly shifted towards helping the slum dwellers to organise themselves through their own efforts. At a certain stage they had come face to face with the anti-social elements who exploited the slum-dwellers but posed as local leaders. The DBSSS had to go through the process of educating the local population and building up alternate leaders who have confidence in themselves and in whom the people have confidence. Thus, people and leaders are able to stand up together to the anti-social elements.

(to be continued)

17. Kirti SHAH, "Housing for the Urban Poor in Ahmedabad: An Integrated Urban Development Approach", *Social Action*, July-September 1977, pp. 335-352.

International Congress on Mission

(Manila, December 2-6, 1979)

M. AMALADOSS, S.J.

ON the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the diocese of Manila, Philippines, the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies of the Philippines co-sponsored an International Congress on Mission in Manila. Delegates — Bishops and National Directors of Pontifical Mission Aid Societies — had come from some forty countries, mostly Asian, though a few had come from Africa, the Americas and Europe. Representatives of a few missionary Congregations were also present as observers. About 30 theologians, working in Asian countries, came as resource persons. There were about 200 participants in all.

The theme of the Congress was “The Good News of God’s Kingdom to the Peoples of Asia”. The Congress sought to set itself in the tradition of *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and the various statements made by the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC), and Bishops’ Institutes sponsored by it, like the Bishops’ Institute for Missionary Activities (BIMA) and the Bishops’ Institute for Social Action (BISA). The focus was on Asia. A series of liturgies centred around various Asian countries strengthened this focus. The aim of the Congress was not to break new ground in the theology of mission, but to see how best we can bring the Good News of God’s Kingdom to the peoples of Asia today. There were nine workshops: the Theology of Mission in the Asian Context, Inculturation, Dialogue, Liberation and Development, Basic Christian Communities and Ministries, Spirituality and Formation, Co-responsibility, Education, and finally the Media.

Papers written by the resource persons were generally made available to the participants before the meeting. A keynote address on “Church and Mission in Relation to the Kingdom of God especially in the Third World Context” by Bishop Patrick D’Souza of Varanasi, India, was delivered on the first day. I shall not attempt to survey these background papers (22 of them).

On the last day of the Congress the delegates voted unanimously to approve a "message" addressed to the peoples of Asia. Besides this Message, each workshop came up with its own Consensus Paper, as the fruit of its discussions. In the following pages I shall present briefly the main ideas that emerge from these papers which are the outcome of the Congress, and make a brief comment on the event of the Congress itself.

The Message

Gathering up the fruits of the various workshops, the Message indicates the task of evangelization today:

It suffices for the present to indicate here the continued building up of the local Church as the focus of the task of evangelization today, with dialogue as its essential mode: through a more resolute, more creative and yet truly discerning and responsible inculturation; through inter-religious dialogue undertaken in all seriousness; through solidarity and sharing with the poor and the advocacy of human rights; through the creation of 'grassroots ecclesial communities' with structures of genuine co-responsibility and ministries of charism and service; through the fostering of evangelizing education in schools and non-formal education modes; and through an adequate media-ministry.

This task is set in the context of the contemporary Asian reality, which presents us with a vision of "a new world being born, of millions of men and women in search of new social structures and relationships, of a renewed humanity". Though this search is a perennial one, it is new "in breadth, restlessness and urgency". This is a common search in which Christians find themselves involved with the followers of other living faiths.

The Asian peoples, while still largely cherishing religious values, have been disillusioned by men of religion, as well as by ideologies and political systems. The Church too does not escape blame.

Many in our Asian countries have in diverse ways met Christ and his Gospel and have been deeply attracted by them. With sorrow we confess that many have not been equally drawn to the Church because so often they did not see in us, in our institutions and in our lives, the image and the realization of the Good News we proclaim. Have we not too frequently made his message mere words and doctrines, his deeds mere precepts and practices, his life merely a complex of rites and institutions?

The Christian communities in Asia, therefore, are challenged to an ever renewed conversion to God's Word so that "our Asian peoples may find the Christian existence and message truly transparent to Jesus and his Gospel, genuinely vibrant with his life". There are already signs of this renewal in the Asian Churches. There is an awakening of interest in a deeper spiritual life, in greater solidarity with the poor, in 'grassroots ecclesial communities' and new forms

of missionary involvement. All this presages a true renewal of mission in Asia. The Message spells out the *newness* of this 'new age of mission'. First of all there is a new awareness that the mission is the task, not only of a few missionaries, nor of a few of the 'older Churches', but of every Christian and every local Church. "Every local Church is responsible for its mission, and co-responsible for the mission of all its sister-Churches." Secondly, "the Spirit of the Lord calls each people and each culture to its own fresh and creative response to the Gospel".

The keynote address, in its conclusion, emphasized this newness in rather strong terms:

We have reached a decisive turning point in the mission history of the Third World: there is no return to the past, neither to the past mission theories, nor to the past mission methods, nor to the past mission goals.

A new era has started, that of the Third World Mission, which grows harmoniously out of the past into a new future.

The tiny Third World Churches are no longer only 'missions', the recipients of material help and of 'mission personnel'. They have now been entrusted by Divine Providence with a tremendous task: to be and to proclaim the Kingdom of God in the Third World with great faith, and a still greater hope, even though their success in terms of the Church structures they will be able to put up, may be minimal. Even so the Third World Churches are called upon to proclaim God's Kingdom not only to the Third World but far beyond to the whole world.

The Message concludes with two touching references: one to "our fellow Christians in the widening Asian 'Church of silence' as well as all those who suffer under totalitarian regimes of every kind"; another to the refugees "from different countries, but especially those from Indochina, now in camps or on the high seas or seeking to cross frontiers".

The Consensus Papers of the Workshops

Though the workshop papers represent the views of the members of each workshop, actually they reflect a wider consensus in the congress. Reading through the Consensus Papers one is struck by the repetition of certain basic themes, though they are set in different contexts and are seen from different points of view. The main focus is on the building up of the local Church, the emphasis however being on the growth of grassroots (basic) Christian communities, with appropriate forms of service and structures of participation. There is a constant stress on a threefold thrust: inculturation, dialogue with peoples of other living faiths and solidarity with the poor. Finally a new attitude is advocated: an attitude of humility and collaboration. The Church does not merely give; it must also

learn to receive. It is not merely challenged to constant conversion and renewal by the Gospel: it has to learn from the cultures and religions with which it is dialoguing. Though the theological spectrum that justifies these attitudes and orientations may be rather wide and at various levels, there is no doubt about a large consensus regarding the concrete tasks outlined above. In surveying the Consensus Papers, I shall not refer again to these recurring themes, but mention only other significant ideas.

The group on Mission Theology in the Asian Context tackles inconclusively an interesting question, raised in the keynote address: "Can Baptism be urged on those who want to adhere to Christ but would find life extremely difficult in the new sociological situation in which Baptism would put them?" I think that the question must be turned upside down. Why should Baptism have uncomfortable *sociological* implications? Why should it cut people off from their cultural and sociological roots? What are we doing to reform Church structures and institutions that alienate the people from their socio-historic situation? In any case, we have been asking for many years, at least in India, more radical questions like: Can the aim of evangelization be to make a Hindu a better Hindu?

The group on Inculturation stresses the need for 'responsible experimentation', proceeding by alternating stages of experience and reflection and subject to evaluation. In the face of the pluralistic cultural and religious conditions of Asian countries a search for a common vision of evangelization becomes a must. While men of different faiths and ideologies are called to dialogue by the need to re-discover "a dynamic, spiritual dimension to life" and to promote "harmony and peace in a world of divisions and conflicts", the Christian himself, through dialogue, "grows in awareness of his partnership with God in the coming about of the Kingdom".

The workshop on Liberation and Development demands unequivocally that "the Church of Asia must become the Church of the Poor". It articulates this demand in the words of BISA V:

What does it mean to be the Church of the Poor? Is not the Church for all men and women, for rich and poor, or saints and sinners? We found an answer in the way many Churches of Asia are moving in the direction of greater and greater involvement with the life of their people: their simply being with the poor; their attempts at working out programmes of human development—integral, respectful of the people's dignity, attuned to their cultures; their standing with them in their hard struggle for justice and for self-empowerment; their insistence that the rich become themselves real members of the Church of the Poor by fulfilling their obligations in justice and charity towards the poor. The Church of the Poor must do all this.

The localization of the Church finds expression in the basic Christian communities. They emerge from below. We cannot create them nor organize them from above. We can only facilitate their emergence and animate and guide their growth. Such communities are "self-nourishing, self-ministering, and self-propagating". What kind of ministries should a basic Christian community have?

If indeed ministries spring up in our Christian communities as the needs of the group and society are identified and met with activated charisms, we definitely must spare no efforts in having a *participative leadership* in our local Churches where everyone feels coresponsible. Only then is the community self-reliant. Only then can the community qua community be a leaven in the dough of concrete social life, playing a catalyst role, and offering a prophetic service both to society and to the Church by its very life-style.

Only the emergence of basic Christian communities will overcome "clericalism, over-institutionalization and stifling legalism. Instead it will make the Church truly a fellowship and communion of God's people, united in charity, respectful of each other's dignity and equality, and effectively at the service of the wider human community."

The group reflecting on Spirituality and Formation for Mission expresses grave concern at "the general tendency in our clergy not to care much for spiritual things". Since faith is something which is personally conveyed, holiness of life is the primary means for mission. Following *Evangelii Nuntiandi* serious attention is given to forms of popular piety.

Encounter with God is also experienced in the depths of the soul through community celebration of life events — as the cycle of life, seasonal celebrations and festivities. Hence, we would like to stress once again that popular piety and folk religiosity must be taken seriously, examined and fostered.

Formation for mission must be "inter-disciplinary, going beyond philosophy and theology to growth in cultural awareness, and be open to the real challenges of service in the varied needs of our Asian peoples." This necessitates a process of action-involvement/reflection-interiorization.

If we recognize that the local Church is the centre and source of evangelization then,

To be effective in its work of evangelising the local Church should, as a matter of great urgency, implement those directives that have been given by and since Vatican II, about the setting up of structures which by their very nature are geared towards the exercise of co-responsibility within the local Church such as parish councils, diocesan pastoral councils, regular meetings of bishops with the presbyterium, senates of priests, meetings of bishops with religious superiors.

We encourage the building up of Basic Christian Communities wherever possible as an effective means of promoting co-responsibility at the grass-roots level.

An area of special concern in the exercise of co-responsibility is that of economic structures where two principles have to be safeguarded, namely: 1. the gradual growth towards self-reliance of the local Churches; and 2. the commitment of Churches in the West to the creation of an economic world structure in which the demands of justice in the developing world are met.

Repeated emphasis on the local Church as the agent of evangelization may lead us to wonder about the role of foreign missionaries. They are

not only living signs of the universality of the Church, but because of their different cultural and Christian background, they enrich and challenge the local Church. The local Church should welcome, accept and help integrate them into her life.

Education has been an important means of missionary effort, involving a proportionately large human and financial investment. This may be a reason why it was the theme of a separate workshop. I paid special attention to two elements of the Asian context: the poor and the youth.

In all her educational endeavours, the Church should make a preferential option for the poor, leading to a genuine commitment and effort to bring about social justice in societies. This implies that, since evangelising education touches on liberation for more humane socio-economic conditions, the Church must break with educational orientations which foster elitism. Consequently provision must be made for widening the possibilities of universal access to education, equalisation of educational opportunities, and stimulating the young and adults to discover with the light of faith that they are called to live their Christian vocation in a more responsible manner within the context of solidarity with others.

Since the immense majority of Asians are young people, the dynamism the young bring to the Church is so far-reaching that their evangelisation is definitely a priority for the Church in Asia.

The Congress in Context

What will be the impact of this Congress on evangelization in Asia? It did not contribute to any progress in theological reflection on mission: none was attempted. The Message of the Congress is inspirational in nature. While it proposes a vision and the broad outlines of an approach, it does not come up with a grand plan or concrete strategies for bearing the Good News to Asia's millions. Neither did the Workshops propose resolutions concrete enough to demand immediate implementation. The Workshops could have been more down to earth and practical; they did not, in fact, resist the temptation of prefacing their vague resolutions with theological reflections.

What did the Congress do then? It *did* nothing. It was an event, an experience. It was the Asian Church becoming aware of its common identity and of its task of proclaiming the Good News in the context of its own existence. It was the Asian Church answering itself and discovering its freedom and spontaneity, its responsibility. The event of the Congress must be set in the dynamic of a movement of self-discovery and conscientization. The main points of emphasis in her task of mission have not radically changed since the FABC meeting in Taipei, 1974. But her understanding and conviction have become deeper. One need no longer talk defensively about inculturation and dialogue, about solidarity with the poor and basic Christian communities. There has been a growing consensus around these points. At the Congress they were refocussed around the task of the Asian Church to bring the Good News to the Asian peoples. The fact that the Directors of the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies and the representatives of the Missionary Congregations were at the Congress together with representative Bishops makes us hope that the Mission in Asia will take on a new dynamism, in a new perspective, with new orientations. The policy makers in the Asian Churches would certainly have gone back home strengthened and supported by the large consensus evident at the meeting.

The Congress was one step — but an important one — in the collective process by which the Asian Churches are becoming conscientized to their responsibility for the proclamation of the Good News in the special context of Asia. The tasks are not new: but there is a new awareness that these tasks are primarily *ours*. In the international fora the voice of Latin America has sounded loud and clear for liberation. The voice of Africa has proclaimed with repeated emphasis the need for indigenization. Asia is discovering her voice, gently and hesitantly, but surely in her ancient wisdom, for a dialogue of life with the people, with their challenging poverty, their rich culture and their living religion.

Note

John Paul II in Istanbul

The visit of Pope John Paul II to Istanbul, 28th-30th November, 1979, is an important step on the march to full Church communion between Rome and Orthodoxy. It links up with the gestures made by Pope Paul VI when he met Patriarch Athenagoras first in Jerusalem and later in Istanbul in 1967. Since this prophetic visit to the Patriarchal See of Constantinople, and the subsequent lifting of the anathemas between the two Churches, a Vatican delegation has been going to Istanbul every year to witness the celebration of the feast of St Andrew, Patron of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and, reciprocally, a delegation has been sent by Constantinople to be present in the Church of Rome for the feast of St Peter, its founder. A little more than a year after the inauguration of his papal ministry, Pope John Paul II decided to lead himself the delegation to Constantinople. He considered this apostolic journey as having special importance and urgency among those he has undertaken so far, and referred to it as an ecumenical pilgrimage, a "journey of great hope". The pope's visit had a unique significance as it coincided with the inauguration of the official theological dialogue between Rome and Orthodoxy, for which a joint Commission has been appointed. The dialogue aims at overcoming together the divergencies that still exist between the "sister-Churches" in order that full communion may be re-established between them.

An exchange of addresses took place on November 29 between the Pope and Patriarch Dimitrios I in St George's Cathedral, seat of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the Phanar. Explaining the meaning of his presence there, the Pope said: "The visit I am paying today is intended to signify a meeting in the common apostolic faith, to walk together towards this full unity which sad circumstances have wounded, specially in the course of the second millenium. How could I fail to express our firm hope in God in order that a new era may dawn?" In his reply, Patriarch Dimitrios said: "This meeting today is intended for God's future — a future which will be again living unity, again common confession, again full communion in the divine Eucharist." On the same day, Pope John Paul II presided at a solemn Concelebration of the Eucharist in the Catholic Cathedral Church of the Holy Spirit at Istanbul. Among those present at the ceremony were the Ecumenical Patriarch, Dimitrios I, the Armenian Patriarch Kalustian, Metropolitan Melitos of Chalcedon, Metropolitan Krisostomos of Myra, and members of the Holy Synod, besides Catholic Metropolitan archbishops. In his homily the Pope recalled the action towards unity of Patriarch Athenagoras and of his own predecessors, John XXIII and Paul VI. He went on to say: "The more and more intense contacts in the last few years have caused us to rediscover the brother-

hood between our two Churches and the reality of a communion between them, even if it is not perfect. The Spirit of God has also shown us more and more clearly the necessity of realizing full unity in order to bear a more effective witness for our time." Referring to the opening of the theological dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church as a whole, the Pope continued: "This is another important phase in the process towards unity. Starting from what we have in common, this dialogue will be called upon to identify, tackle and solve all the difficulties that still forbid us full unity." John Paul II stressed the significance of the Churches' mutual participation in the feasts of their patronal saints, Peter and Andrew, as follows: "Communion in prayer will lead us to full communion in the Eucharist. I venture to hope that this day is near. Personally I would like it to be very near. Have we not already in common the same eucharistic faith and the true sacraments, by virtue of the apostolic succession? Let us hope that complete communion in faith, especially in the ecclesiological field, will soon permit this full *communicatio in sacris*." And again: "In the course of the second millenium, our Churches had become petrified, as it were, in their separation. Now the third millenium of Christianity is drawing near. May the dawn of this new millenium rise on a Church that has recovered her full unity, in order better to bear witness, in the midst of the exacerbated tensions of the world, to God's transcendent love, manifested in his Son Jesus Christ."

On November 30, Feast of St Andrew, Pope John Paul II was present at the Byzantine liturgy of St John Chrysostom, concelebrated in the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St George at the Phanar, by the Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I and the Holy Synod. Since the Great Schism in the 11th century, this was the first time that a Pope had personally attended an Orthodox Eucharist. At the end of the liturgy both the Pope and the Patriarch delivered important discourses. Explaining the spirit of his visit, as successor of Peter, to the See of Constantinople, the Pope described the special role of Peter, the Rock, the "leader of the apostles", as follows: "He had the task of ensuring the harmony of apostolic preaching. A brother among brothers, he received the mission of strengthening them in the faith (cf. Lk 22, 32); he is the first to have the responsibility of watching over the union of all, of ensuring the symphony of the Holy Churches of God in faithfulness to 'the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints' (Jude 3)." He went on to say: "This visit to the first See of the Orthodox Church shows clearly the will of the whole Catholic Church to go forward in the march towards the unity of all, and also its conviction that the re-establishment of full communion with the Orthodox Church is a fundamental stage of the decisive progress of the whole ecumenical movement." The pope spoke of "our impatience for unity". Having recalled that during the almost entire first millenium of Christianity the two sister-Churches, despite different sensitivities, had preserved unity, while the second millenium was darkened by a mutual estrangement, the Pope said: "The wound is not yet healed. But the Lord can cure it and he bids us do our best to help the process. Here we are now at the end of the second millenium: is it not time to hasten towards perfect brotherly reconciliation, so that the dawn of the third

millennium may find us standing side by side, in full communion, to bear witness together to salvation before the world, the evangelization of which is waiting for this sign of unity?" The recent re-establishment of relations and contacts between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches, the "dialogue of charity", has allowed them to "become aware again of the deep communion that already unites us, and enables us to consider each other and treat each other as sister-Churches". This effort must be continued. "It is necessary to draw the consequences of this mutual theological rediscovery, wherever Catholics and Orthodox live together. Habits of isolation must be overcome in order to collaborate in all fields of pastoral action in which this collaboration is made possible by the almost complete communion that already exists between us." In the Pope's words, the theological dialogue which is about to start "will have the task of overcoming the misunderstandings and disagreements which still exist between us, if not at the level of faith, at least at the level of theological formulation". The dialogue should take place in an atmosphere of worship and availability, for "it is only in worship, with a keen sense of the transcendence of the inexpressible mystery 'which surpasses knowledge' (Eph 3, 19) that we will be able to size up our divergences and 'to impose no burden beyond what is indispensable' (Acts 15, 28) to re-establish communion (cf. *U.R.* n. 18)." The Pope added: "It seems to me, in fact, that the question we must ask ourselves is not so much whether we can re-establish full communion as whether we still have the right to remain separated. We must ask ourselves this question in the very name of our faithfulness to Christ's will for his Church. . .".

On the same day, November 30, John Paul II and Dimitrios I signed a joint Declaration in which they announced the start of the theological dialogue between the two Churches and the constitution of the mixed Catholic-Orthodox Commission which will be responsible for it. The Declaration said:

"... Seeking only the glory of God through the accomplishment of his will, we affirm again our resolute determination to do everything possible to hasten the day when full communion will be re-established between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church and when we shall at last be able to celebrate the divine Eucharist.

... The progress made in the preparatory stage permits us to announce that the theological dialogue is about to begin and to make public the list of the members of the mixed Catholic-Orthodox Commission that will be responsible for it.

This theological dialogue aims not only at progressing towards the re-establishment of full communion between the Catholic and Orthodox sister-Churches, but also at contributing to the multiple dialogues that are developing in the Christian world in search of its unity.

The dialogue of charity (cf. Jn 13, 34; Eph 4, 1-7), rooted in complete faithfulness to the one Lord Jesus Christ and to his will for his Church (cf. Jn 17, 21), has opened up the way to better understanding of our mutual theological positions and, thereby, to new approaches to the theological work and to a new attitude with regard to the common past of our Churches. This purification of the collective memory of our Churches is an important fruit of the

dialogue of charity and an indispensable condition of future progress. This dialogue of charity must continue and be intensified in the complex situation which we have inherited from the past, and which constitutes the reality in which our effort must take place today.

We want the progress in unity to open up new possibilities of dialogue and collaboration with believers of other religions, and with all men of good will, in order that love and brotherhood may prevail over hatred and opposition among men. We hope to contribute in this way to the coming of true peace in the world. We implore this gift of him who was, who is, and who will be, Christ our one Saviour and our real peace.

* * *

A first impression gathered from the Pope's speeches is his "impatience" for full communion between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches, which he considers an important step leading to reunion with the other Churches and the fulfilment of the ecumenical movement. Impressive also is the Pope's insistence on the part that must be played at the level of the local Churches through the "dialogue of charity". Especially noteworthy is the fact that the Pope conceives his special role as the Bishop of Rome, not in terms of the "universal bishop" of the Church, but as ensuring the harmony in faith and charity between the Churches. He resolutely adopts the ecclesiological perspective of Vatican II, emphasizing communion and collegiality, and even refers in unmistakable terms to the "Sobornost" (the "symphony" of the Churches), dear to Orthodoxy. Commenting on the Pope's journey and on his interventions, an Orthodox theologian, Olivier Clement, writes: "This encounter, this journey represent a spiritual event of primary importance. They make it possible to visualize the rapprochement and mutual integration of Eastern and Western Christianity as the horizon set before us for the year 2000."

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Continued from p. 96

that has grown out of it. On this count he is critical of Shankara who, though he did not deny Brahman knowledge to *śūdras*, denied them the right to study the *Vedas*.

The author's conviction is that religion (here Hinduism) need not bar India's progress, but social institutions with religious sanctions do. The rise of the *bhakti* movement after Brahmanism makes an opening for equality among believers. But did it help remove social distinctions in Hindu society? The author finds that equality of men before God did not

appreciably affect the distinctions in society. The *Gita* "does not make 'love of God' find expression in 'love to mankind'" (p. 40). Our author thinks that the humanist pragmatism of Tirukkural of Valluvar must join forces with Hinduism to combine the common good with individual salvation. The Hindu idea of individual salvation needs this modernisation. The book is a sign of the growing awareness today among Hindus of the great contemporary social question.

S. AROKIASAMY, S.J.

Book Reviews

Reference Book

New Catholic Encyclopedia. Volume XVII. Supplement: Change in the Church. *Publishers Guild*, in association with the *McGraw-Hill Book Company*, Washington, D.C., New York, N.Y., 1979. Pp. xv-812. \$ 49.50.

The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (15 volumes) has been reviewed in this periodical (cf. *THE CLERGY MONTHLY* 1967, pp. 386-391). As it had been in the making during the Second Vatican Council and was published soon after (1967), there was room for a first Supplementary Volume (Volume XVI) to give a full account of the new orientations in the life of the Church that resulted from the Council. This Volume, comprising the years 1967 to 1974, was also reviewed here (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1976, pp. 134-135). The present Volume XVII is a second Supplementary Volume to the collection. As the subtitle indicates, it concentrates on "Change in the Church". The Council has set the Church in motion, but it took time to assimilate the new orientations and to make them operative in actual life. It is this process of change in doctrine and praxis, through movements and institutions, which this Volume seeks to describe. As its predecessor had already done, this second supplementary volume also takes into account cultural developments and philosophical trends affecting the life of the Church, even though the stress is on new trends in theology, especially ecclesiology, and mission. The Editor rightly remarks that through the two Constitutions *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes* the Council had called for a renewed vitality of the Church's life, both *ad intra* and *ad extra*. The Volume takes into account both these domains. The Editor adds: "The Supplement is self-contained, but is also designed to bring out the impact of postconciliar thought and life on earlier entries in the *Encyclopedia*" (pp. xiii). Thus entries are resumed from the previous volumes whenever important developments called for new treatment, while new entries are introduced to account for movements that came to the fore only after the

period covered by the first supplement. Thus, for example, we find entries on 'Liberation Theology' and 'Black Theology' which were not found in Volume XVI, while 'Political Theology' is resumed and considerably developed. The whole field of non-Christian religions and inter-religious dialogue had been inadequately treated in Volume XVI. In the present volume we find articles, for instance, on 'Church and Hinduism', 'Islamic/Roman Catholic Dialogue'. Church institutions which have sprung from the Vatican II renewal are well covered, with articles on liturgy, Ministries, Ecumenical Dialogues, Synods of Bishops, etc.; but, as was perhaps unavoidable, articles on local organisations take into account mostly, and almost exclusively, the American scene. The whole field of human rights and justice and peace is much more present here than in the preceding volume, and more room is given to the laity and to women in particular. Biographical accounts are given of persons who have died during the period covered, and whose life, thought and action have greatly influenced the life of the Church, such as Bultmann, Corbishley, Daniélou, D'Arcy, Döpfner, John Paul I, Journet, Lercaro, etc.

The volume contains close to 800 articles, written by some 500 contributors who represent a significant cross-section of the people of God. A useful appendix provides a catalogue of Roman Documents from 1966 to 1978 on change in the Church. The volume ends with a topical index of documents and a general index. The Catholic University of America deserves to be congratulated and thanked for bringing up-to-date through this added volume a work which for many years will remain basic reference on the life of the Catholic Church. J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Rahneriana

Theological Investigations. By Karl RAHNER. Volume XVI. London, Darton Longman and Todd, 1979. Pp. 275. £ 9.50.

This volume XVI of Rahner's *Investigations* (Volume XV is to be published

shortly) corresponds to the first half of Volume XII of the *Schriften*, already reviewed in this periodical (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1977, pp. 339-340). The essays it contains centre around the theme "Experience of the Spirit, Source of Theology". The theme is no doubt important at a time when we have become more vividly aware—not least in India—that no theologizing is valid and credible which is not based on personal experience. But, no less importantly, this experience must be that of the Spirit of Jesus Christ in his Church. And so Rahner understands it who, much inspired here by Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, insists on the ecclesial dimension of the experience of the Spirit. The volume is divided into four parts: "Faith and Spirit", "Spiritual Theology in Christian Tradition", "Listening to Scripture", "Questions about God". Rahner studies the experience of faith as essential commitment, distinguishing it from mere religious enthusiasm and placing it between rationality and emotion. In one essay he returns to a favourite theme, distinguishing anonymous and explicit faith. Related to the experience of the Spirit is the ancient doctrine of the 'spiritual senses', of which Origen may be said to have been the founder and which was pursued into the Middle Ages. Rahner's already ancient but important study on Origen is reproduced here. Another essay shows how the *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius can be adopted for community retreats and discernment. Rahner also shows the place which the experience of the Spirit plays in "listening to Scripture": the truth of God must be accepted in faith; so must the history of revelation (of which the Scriptures are the record) as the second Vatican Council insisted. Especially relevant to the Indian context are the essays on the hiddenness of God and on the incomprehensibility of God according to Thomas Aquinas. They help to see that the opposition between the Western and the Eastern traditions is often grossly exaggerated; St Thomas is after many Church Fathers a proponent of *theologia negativa*; while God communicates himself fully in Jesus Christ, he does so as *deus absconditus*. Also important in the Indian context is the essay on "The One Christ and the Universality of Salvation", in which Rahner shows that the cross of Christ is the consequence of God's saving initiative and at the same time the cause of man's salvation. A short piece on the mystery of the Trinity adds little to what Rahner has written about it elsewhere.

These few remarks suffice to show that this latest volume of *Investigations* offers on an important theme the same rich fare as its predecessors. It is a welcome addition to the collection.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

The Spirit in the Church By Karl RAHNER. London, Burns and Oates, 1979. Pp. 104. £ 2.25.

This other book by K. Rahner is also concerned with the "Experience of the Spirit"; but, while the previous volume centred on the articulation of the experience in theological reflection, this one concentrates on the experience itself in the Christian and the Church and on the necessary discernment to which it is subject. The first part of the volume is a translation of *Erfahrung des Geistes* and appears for the first time in English; the second and third contain, in a revised version, sections from *The Dynamic Element in the Church* and *Visions and Prophecies*, previously published in English by Burns and Oates. Rahner asks the question: Is there such a thing as experiencing the Spirit? He answers it in the light of Scripture and of the experience of the mystics, of the history of enthusiastic and charismatic movements in the Church and of the present charismatic renewal. But, while enthusiastic experiences cannot be rejected out of hand, they need to be tested. The real value of Rahner's book lies in providing theological criteria for this discernment. Thereby it fills a gap which the recent flow of literature on the charismatic renewal has to a great extent left open. Rahner stresses the place of charismatic movements in the institutional Church and their relationship to those in authority. He rejects a facile opposition not only between institutional and charismatic Church but also between office and charism; for office itself is charismatic. He thus distinguishes in the Church between institutional and non-institutional charisms, the latter remaining subject to institutional regulation. The last part of the book proposes criteria for discerning genuine from spurious visions and prophecies. Here too discernment is necessary as many phenomena can very well be explained by mere psychology.

Rahner's book should be of equal help to charismatic enthusiasts and to those who feel ill at ease with the movement. It will enable the former to test their enthusiasm; it will help the latter to realize that they too may be experiencing the Spirit in the midst of everyday banal life.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Ignatius of Loyola. By Karl RAHNER, S.J. With an Historical Introduction by Paul IMHOF, S.J. London, Collins, 1979. Pp. 63. £ 4.95.

Ignatius of Loyola portrays colourfully the life of a man whose love for the Church has always served as a reminder for her to remain faithful to the ideals of her Founder. In the first part of the book, entitled "Ignatius of Loyola Speaks to a Modern Jesuit", the renowned theologian, Karl Rahner, personifies some of the main characteristic features which Ignatius wanted to see in his sons. What is most fascinating here is the author's ability to translate the Ignatian charism in modern language, adapting it to the needs and challenges of our times. In doing so Rahner tries to capture the essence of Ignatian spirituality. This is very well shown in his analysis of "To be a Disciple of Christ" (pp. 21-22) and "Devotion to the Church" (pp. 26-29).

The second part of the book deserves a very special mention. It is a very impressive collection of colour photographs by Helmut Nils Loose, depicting some of the familiar scenes from the life of Ignatius. At the end of this splendid collection of no less than 52 photographs there is a brief explanation on each of them.

The third part of the book is devoted to a short biography of St Ignatius by Paul Imhof. The author succeeds in depicting skillfully the highlights of Ignatius' life (1491-1556) through delightful pictures printed in the margin.

From cover to cover, through texts and pictures, the book illustrates vividly the life of a person whose impact is still strongly felt in the world even to this day.

JOE MATHIAS, S.J.

Pastoral Problems

Watching for Wings. Theology and Mental Illness in a Pastoral Setting. By Roger GRAINGER. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979. Pp. xiv-152. £ 2.95.

There is a tendency to resolve the problem of the severely mentally sick by segregating them in mental hospitals which are supposed to be places apart from normal society. While such hospitals have their own identity, they also reflect wider society with its ills. Hence an in-depth study of these institutions can, not only help the hospital staff and chaplains in their ministrations, but also cast a lot of light on society at large.

Mental illness is in fact the erection of defences against the inability to cope with social responsibilities and is to be attributed as much to the neglect of society as to the weakness of the sufferer. For instance, the schizophrenic "is the total victim of his own symbolic faculty, his awareness of the implications of being a vulnerable, solitary, oppressed human animal" (p. 27). Hence any adequate treatment must take into account the full significance of the malady. No cure is possible if the conditions that caused it are not tackled. The anthropologist Malinowski has drawn attention to the restorative function of religion as the symbol of the counter-attacking force of life, not only in the context of physical death, but also with regard to all traumatic social breakdown. The chaplain as the minister of religion has a special therapeutic role. This is all the more efficacious because he does not belong to the administrative structure of the institution.

The author brings out the need of respecting the mentally ill. It can happen that people who have periods of mental illness discover things that they would not have discovered otherwise. The author speaks of people whom he has met "who are classified as mentally ill and yet have an experience of the Holy Spirit such as I have never come across outside" (p. 15). They may have built up a protective covering around themselves which they would be able to remove without hurt only in an atmosphere of understanding and love. But there is also the need to bring them to face their responsibilities. From the Christian standpoint, according to the author, "acceptance and judgment are not separable" (p. 69). But the judgment is to be seen in the context of the healing forgiveness of Christ.

This summary does not do full justice to the wealth of insights found in the book. It is to be welcomed as a valuable contribution to the understanding as well as prevention and treatment of mental illness.

G. LOBO, S.J.

To Die is Gain. The Experience of One's Own Death. By Johann C. HAMPE. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979. Pp. xiv-145. £ 3.25. (Available from Examiner Press Bookshop, 35 Dalal Street, Bombay 400023.)

Although there have been a few instances of spontaneous revivals in the past, it is the modern technique of resuscitation that has enabled a large number of people to come back to life

after going through the process of dying. The experience is necessarily mysterious and hence not easy to describe in ordinary language. Yet several people have spoken about it and there seems to be some consistency in their reports. A number of books have already appeared on the subject. The present work is specially remarkable for its analysis of some accounts and the attempt to draw some conclusions for our dealings with the dying and also for facing our own death. Certain parallels have also been drawn from the experience of mysticism.

Seen from outside or from a medical point of view, dying is a process by which the unity of the person disintegrates while the vegetative activities gradually cease. In this way it is seen as a deprivation. But according to the accounts from within, consciousness does not end with dying, but is heightened. The self seems to escape from the body, the whole panorama of life is reviewed and the self seems to expand. In dying one has to yield up one's will, in Christian terms to finally surrender it to the Creator. The accounts suggest that, contrary to the common horrific images of death, the final hour brings liberation from pain and fear.

The author draws a number of conclusions for doctors and clergy. They should know that the dying person is 'conscious' much longer than one thinks. Even when signs of consciousness have ceased, he has not become our 'object'. He may still be aware of what is going on and especially feel the sensation of touch. We should not fit the dying person into our psychological world of greed and desire. Dying is not a disaster and hence the doctor must realize his clinical limitations in prolonging earthly life. The clergyman must realize that it is not useless to call to the seemingly unconscious mind of the dying person texts which have helped him in critical situations before. It is even more important to be united with him in silent presence.

Although the author's reflections on euthanasia and 'natural death' are not entirely clear, he rightly affirms: "I am neither desirous for anyone one day to cut short my dying process in this way; nor do I want my helpless body to have a final period of vegetation forced on it when it is no longer able to achieve the act of living" (p. 129).

The newer insights into the dying process have also lessons for the living regarding separation, grief and looking forward to their own death.

Many of the conclusions drawn by the author are common-place beliefs for believing Christians; but they seem to be startling in a world that has largely abandoned faith in after-life. Still, they derive new strength from the accounts of those who have returned from the brink of death. On one point the reader remains with a puzzle. Anyone who has cared for the dying knows that in many cases dying is an agony. But the accounts given here and in similar works do not seem to manifest any great struggle. Is this to be explained by a selective presentation of cases or is it in fact the genuine common experience of dying? While there is need for more investigation into this fascinating subject, the present work can be considered an important contribution to the understanding and pastoral care of the dying.

G. LOBO, S.J.

Renewal of Religious Life

The Way of the Preacher. By Simon TUGWELL, O.P. London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1979. Pp. xv-200. £ 3.95. (Available from Examiner Press Bookshop, 35 Dalal Street, Bombay 400023 for Rs 69.50)

As the Dominicans or the Order of Preachers are preparing for their General Chapter, it is but proper that an eminent writer of the order should publish a book on its spirituality. The spirituality of being a preacher is studied in the light of the order's early traditions, highlighting the charismatic element in preaching. However, these traditions help to bring into focus a more fundamental christian tradition, a more general aspiration with a variety of forms in the Church. Hence the book should be of help to every Christian who is alert to the apostolic element of his Christian life.

The book is concerned with the grace or charism of preaching, rather than its content or technique. Incidentally, it raises many issues regarding religious life, like prayer, common life, celibacy, poverty and obedience, to some of which the author hopes to return in a later study. While not denying the undoubted importance of these topics, Tugwell lays down a hypothesis that preaching is a legitimate focus for the Christian life; many other elements fall into place, in an ordered way, around the centrality of this chosen starting point.

The Dominican Order is definitely an institution, but it is marked from the outset by a strong inspiration 'to live an

upright life, to learn and to teach'. The apostolic freedom which the early Friars enjoyed might surprise some who are inclined to think that Christian freedom is a new discovery. To be a preacher for some might mean to risk everything, the salvation of the preacher being inseparable from his ministry. The author does not agree with those who understand Dominican spirituality to mean that 'one must sanctify himself before he can go out to help his neighbour'. If God opens the mouth even of Balaam's ass, one need not regard preaching as simply an overflow from one's own state of sanctity. There should be no dichotomy between contemplation and action; both must be rooted in the unitary source of all life and being, which is the act of God. The preacher must be aware of his poverty. He should not just ask, 'What is best for me?', but 'What is best for the mission to which I have been called?'. While some have an eminent charism of preaching, in the case of others the preacher's own life is taking shape round his preaching apostolate, and the chief evidence of this is a growth in humanity and humility, a readiness to preach in spite of all difficulties. Preaching thus becomes a school of spirituality for the preacher. The author also tackles the role of community life and apostolate. Half the work is devoted to historical investigations on some special questions, like 'unavoidable sins' and 'notorious and non-notorious sins'. All in all the whole work is enlightening and stimulating.

G. Lobo, S.J.

Liturgical Music and Prayer

Spirit and Song of the New Liturgy. By Lucien DEISS, C.S.Sp. *Cincinnati, Ohio, World Library Publications*, 1976. New Revised Edition. Pp. xxi-267. \$ 7.95. (Available from Asian Trading Corporation, Post Box 11029, Bombay 400020, for Rs 67.60.)

The book deals with the liturgical reforms in the field of sacred music as set forth by the Second Vatican Council. The main principle underlying the reforms is: "the ministerial function" (ch. 1) of the liturgy and of the celebrating community, more particularly of liturgical song and music. "How does singing serve the liturgy? How does a particular song serve the liturgy? What can be done to insure this 'service'?" The ministerial function of music in the

liturgy is fourfold: music adds solemnity to the celebration; singing increases the effectiveness of the texts; it enhances the liturgy with beauty, and is a unifying element for the congregation. Against this background the 'ministerial function' of the music of the participants is examined, viz. the music sung by the priest, the people, the choir (ch. 2). There follows a discussion about the duties and function of the leader of the congregation (ch. 3). The next chapters apply the same principle of ministerial function to various parts of the liturgical celebration: acclamations and dialogues (ch. 4); the responsorial psalm (ch. 5); processional songs (ch. 6); the litanies (ch. 7); hymns (ch. 8); the Creed (ch. 9). Some considerations are added about musical instruments (ch. 10), and Gregorian chant (ch. 11).

Deiss is known as a Scripture scholar, liturgist and musician; he is the right man for a study of this kind. He shows himself quite at ease in the history of the liturgy, its meaning and the importance of the various parts of the celebration. Each section of the book begins by exploring the biblical and liturgical meaning of the action, and the type of music and participants called for. The book contains many interesting details of a practical character: v.g., about the manner of directing the singing (p. 60); the expediency of having or not having a recessional hymn, and how it could best be chosen and performed (p. 207); how to foster participation of the congregation by means of acclamations and dialogue (pp. 95ff). The book is a source of information and of pastoral advice.

The Foreword contains excellent principles about the relation between tradition, reform and the future. At a time when attempts are being made at adapting the liturgy to Indian conditions many of the principles exposed in this book are worth considering even though the study is directly concerned with the Roman liturgy as we have it at present.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

Biblical Prayers. By Lucien DEISS. *Cincinnati, Ohio, World Library Publications*, 1976. Pp. xii-197. \$ 5.50. (Available from Asian Trading Corporation, Post Box 11029, Bombay 400020 for Rs 46.75.)

This beautiful collection of prayers inspired by God's word and so near to our daily occupations is the fruit of a life dedicated to the study of Scripture and the desire of sharing with others the "experience of the timeliness of the Word

for all ages, of its harmonious adaptability to our wonderful world of today — the most beautiful because it is our own and the only one in which God speaks to us".

The book offers prayers for the various seasons of the liturgical year, prayers to Our Lady, prayers "for all seasons" (an important section) and several morning and evening prayers. A good general index makes of this collection a valuable pastoral instrument. The book, indeed, can be used either for private prayer or for community prayer (as a paraliturgical prayer). In view of a community service the Introduction exposes a practical way of proceeding, a method which is inspired by the Church's traditional prayer, viz. introductory song, psalms followed by a Scripture reading, (homily), litanies, presidential prayer and concluding blessing or doxology. For the same purpose a series of responses for the litanies, with musical setting, and a series of concluding blessings will be found at the end of the volume.

For the last few years we have seen a flood of books on prayer, not always of exceptional quality. Deiss' book is outstanding for the freshness and charm of the prayers, their profound meaning through their constant allusion to Scripture passages. This is a book which can be warmly recommended.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

With One Voice. A Hymn Book for all the Churches. *London, Collins*, 1979. Melody Line Edition. Pp. 720. £ 1.85. Harmony Edition. Pp. 784. £ 5.90.

The new hymn-book is conceived as an international ecumenical hymnal. The collection is made up of 579 songs (Standard edition); a Catholic Supplement of another 45 songs is announced for Autumn 1979. The book is said to contain "the best of the living tradition of classic hymns sung in all Christian Churches, and the best new hymns (word and music) from all over the world, being written today." About a quarter of these contemporary songs were written since 1900 and about a hundred since 1945. Within each section of the hymnal the songs are arranged according to the date of the original composition. Wherever possible, older forms of the language (thou/thee/thy/and verbal forms) have been modernized. Texts, melodies or harmonies are given in their original version; some, however, have been re-harmonized.

To judge hymn-books is not easy. Liturgical music must be adapted to the celebrating community according to cir-

cumstances. Melodies reflect the lyrical genius of each people. This fact creates some difficulty for an international hymnal, especially if it is intended to be used in different continents. The new hymnal gives almost exclusively Western songs; true, there are a few Asian or African compositions but some of these appear rather as an exotic curiosity or they are westernized forms. On the other hand the ecumenical blend of songs of various Churches, each with its own character both in text and music, is beneficial, at least within one culture or cognate cultures.

In the new hymnal the style of the hymns is predominantly in choral form (traditional in certain Churches); relatively few songs appear in other forms. There are also a few Gregorian melodies (with English text). One wonders why these Gregorian melodies were not borrowed from more critical editions rather than from the *Sarum Antiphonal* and similar versions. Thus we find the *Pange Lingua* (in 3rd mode) with a F sharp; the *Veni Creator* taken from a *Vesperale Romanum* of 1848; etc. As to the accompaniment of Gregorian melodies, this might have gained by being of a purer diatonic character with a clearer punctuation. In this hymnal, as in other attempts, it remains very difficult to find any satisfactory combination of an English text with a Gregorian melody. We note also some incongruities, as in No 115 (Ps 95) marked as a 'traditional' melody but 'arranged' to a modern rhythm, with a heavy piano-accompaniment. However, besides songs which to me seem to be lacking in freshness and spontaneity, there are many good items.

In India the hymnal may render some service in those Churches where English is still used. There it might offer a choice of songs of a more ponderous musical line with a more meaningful text, to balance somewhat the jerky melodies accompanied by the thumping of guitar, set not seldom to an insignificant text, with which many places seem to be plagued at present.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

Three Popes

Pope John Paul II. The Life of my Friend Karol Wojtyla. By M. MALINSKI. *London, Burns and Oates*, 1979. Pp. 283. £ 6.95.

It is not customary to write biographical accounts of living persons. That accounts are written of the life of a

new pope is a sign as much of the present invasion of the media as of the renewed interest in the papacy. The book under review has, however, the advantage of being written by a close friend of Karol Wojtyła who together with him has lived through almost all of the same national and many of the same local events. The author — himself a priest — is moreover a leading Polish writer. The account is straight-forward and unassuming. It enables the reader to get a deeper insight into the background of the new pope than has been made available through press reports at the time of the election: his warm personality, his formation years, his participation in the long agony of his beloved Poland during the second world war, his academic career, and, not least, the part he played as a Church leader, both in his country and abroad, till his election as pope. The author has successfully made use of a flashback technique whereby the recent events surrounding the election alternate with the ancient story of the pope's life, till both past and present intermingle at the end of the book. This makes for sustained interest in a narrative which is always lively and bears everywhere, even in the record of the last events, the stamp of the eye-witness. It is of course not possible to judge the accuracy of the story of the conclave. But I have noted on p. 56 a serious error: Mgr Benelli (who was made a Cardinal only after being transferred by Paul VI from the Vatican Curia to the See of Florence) never was Secretary of State, but only *sostituto* — even if in that capacity he exercised a considerable influence.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

The Year of Three Popes. By Peter Hebblethwaite. London/Glasgow, Collins (Fount Paperbacks), 1979. Pp. 233. 95p. (Available from St Paul International Book Centre, New Delhi and ISPCK Bookshop, Kashmere Gate, Delhi.)

P. Hebblethwaite is a brilliant journalist and chronicler of recent Church events. But he is also a theologian capable of deep insights into the significance of those events for the life of the Church. Those qualities were evident in the account he wrote some years ago of the evolution of the Church after Vatican II. The book, entitled *The Runaway Church*, has been reviewed in this periodical (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1976, p. 232). The same qualities are found in the present story of the eventful year 1978. This new book was written with record speed, having been published the same year and going now through its

third impression. Hebblethwaite follows the development of events: from Paul VI whose heritage to the Church he analyzes with fairness and sympathy, to the surprise of the first conclave and, through the short papal ministry of John Paul I which changed the style of the papacy to the other surprise of the election of John Paul II. Seldom has the pace of change been so quick as in the space of those few months. The book brings the two conclaves to life without indulging in fanciful conjecture but relying on whatever reliable information has been available. Yet its main merit lies, beyond this, in the theological interpretation of the events and of the promise they hold for a further evolution of the papacy. This makes the book not only interesting reading but theologically worthwhile.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Illustrissimi. The Letters of Pope John Paul I. By Albino Luciani. London, Collins (Fount Paperbacks), 1979. Pp. 285. 95p.

While he was Patriarch of Venice, Pope John Paul I wrote 'open letters' to *illustrissimi* which were first published in an Italian paper, *Il Messaggero di Sant Antonio* and later collected into one volume. In his preface to this English edition Cardinal Hume remarks that, while other popes wrote encyclicals, and pope John XXIII also diaries, Albino Luciani wrote little as pope and so we must turn to what he had written previously to know the man better, his thoughts and his ideas. The letters are addressed, some to historical some to fictional figures. Addressees include important scientific, historical and literary people, characters from their books, plays, operas and poems, also saints and even... Jesus Christ. In spite of, or perhaps because of this literary device, the letters do reveal the man as one rooted in the Gospel, alert to the problems of our time, full of humanity and pastoral concern for all men, especially the poor and needy. Their merit lies less in their literary value than in the Gospel message they convey. The volume is delightfully illustrated by Papas.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Biographical

Flame in the Snow. By Julia De Beausobre. London, Collins, 1979. Pp. 175. £ 1.25.

The Russian Orthodox Church is noted for its solemn Byzantine liturgy. How-

ever, popular piety has a strong hold over the ordinary people. This is particularly manifested by the cult of Saints about whom there are pious legends. These cannot be judged from the canons of modern history. They represent a peculiar literary genre. They are built upon a core of historical facts around which pious beliefs are built up. These manifest the faith and mentality of the believers. Hence they are a precious witness to the traditions of a people.

This book is one such legendary account of the life of St Serafim of Sarov, the most beloved of Russia's saints. The author has gathered the information both from written accounts and oral traditions which complement each other. She has also attempted to interpret the symbolism of some of the stories and in the process has thought it fit to introduce some imaginary details into the traditional accounts.

The book recaptures the mood of a bygone age. If it is read with an open mind it can reveal a new world rich in imagery and symbolism. It would help to counterbalance the excessive rationalism of the modern world and hence contribute to deepening Christian faith. One has not to take the episodes narrated literally. If one understands them properly, one could avoid naive credulity or exaggerated scepticism.

G. Lobo, S.J.

The Golden String. An Autobiography. By Bede GRIFFITHS. *London, Collins, 1979. Pp. 192. 95p.*

Bede Griffiths is at the forefront of inculturation and the Ashram movement in India. His more recent books and articles express better his present thought. Still, this can be fully understood only in the light of his earlier experiences in England. These have been detailed in this autobiography which already appeared in 1954. The new, cheap, edition is welcome. It will prepare the reader for the forthcoming second volume of the *guru's* autobiography, covering his Ashram life and his attempts to form a dialogue centre. The author himself has written a Foreword, explaining how the changes in the Church since Vatican II have affected his thinking.

The book appropriately starts with the spiritual experience Griffiths had as a school boy when he was walking alone at sunset. His early acquaintance with English nature and poets must have prepared him for absorbing Eastern thought. His philosophical education has left the mark of clarity in thought

and expression. His attraction for Western medieval mystics provided him with a solid background for his later initiation to Indian mysticism. Benedictine monasticism was, of course, the necessary prelude to his mission in India. All these matters are dealt with in the author's fresh and inspiring style. He also shares his doubts and difficulties, the inevitable part of a spiritual search. The somewhat simple devotion to the Church first in its Anglican form, then in Roman Catholicism, has now evolved into a more comprehensive, although not final, vision of the action of Christ in the world today, as he himself explains in the Foreword.

G. Lobo, S.J.

The Human Search with Teilhard de Chardin. By George APPLETON, Michael LE MORVAN, John NEWSON and Melvyn THOMPSON. *London, Collins, 1979. Pp. 159. £ 1.25.*

In spite of wide publicity and many introductions, Teilhard's work has remained a closed book to some because of difficulties of terminology, style and background, or has assumed a controversial character. Hence there is room for one more introduction provided it breaks new ground. This guide-book to Teilhard's thought comes from four authors who have thoroughly imbibed his spirit. Each one shows how Teilhard has helped his personal search and spiritual life. Through well selected readings, they wish to initiate the reader to the same search and spiritual growth.

Teilhard was not a professional theologian and his writings are not meant to be taken as systematic expositions of Christology or of Christian Anthropology. They are the recordings of the personal search of a genius and a prophet who strongly felt that Christianity needs a fresh elucidation to meet the modern scientific age with its evolutionary thrust. Many of his scientific or theological views may now seem dated, but what is most relevant still is his spirit of *search* which comes out strongly in the chapters of this book. Because of the well selected passages from Teilhard's many works it may be taken also as a good anthology. Above all, the profound reflections of Teilhard with the introductions of the authors could serve as excellent spiritual reading.

G. Lobo, S.J.

Paulo Freire: His Life, Works and Thought. By Denis E. COLLINS. *New York, Paulist Press, 1977. Pp. 94. \$ 2.45.*

Paulo Freire shot up to fame with the publication of his work *Pedagogy of the*

Oppressed (1970). It is well known that he is one of the chief brains behind the current view of adult non-formal education, not merely as literacy or gaining of skills, but as 'conscientization' and gaining the ability of bringing about social change in the milieu. However, without a complete understanding of his background and all his works, some tend to consider him as just one of several neo-Marxists. The present small work fills the lacuna to a large extent. It is a very good introduction to this pioneer of social change in Latin America, whose influence has now spread throughout the world. The greater part of the book is devoted to Freire's philosophy which, though to a great extent original, is also indebted to previous thought. The author clearly shows that, besides Marxism, Personalism, Existentialism and above all Christianity have influenced his thought. His pedagogy, which has drawn the most attention, is based on more fundamental questions like: "What is reality?", and "How can one know reality?"

This little book is a must for all those engaged in non-formal education and social change in general. As it is well researched, we may hope that the author will one day produce an expanded version. The reader would want to know more, not only about the thought, but also the life of this prophetic figure.

G. LOBO, S.J.

Social Change

Church and Social Justice. By Stan LOURDUSAMY. Bangalore, Centre for Social Action, 1979. Pp. 70. Rs 2.

This is the 18th of the excellent booklets in the Centre for Social Action Series. It is written in a clear and forceful style and packs a lot of material in a brief space.

The author analyses the present social situation in India with its inbuilt unjust structures and institutionalised violence which call for liberation. Then he asks whether the Church can play a liberating role. In spite of constraints like minority status and institutionalisation, he feels that it can do so. But it will have to transcend its present over-involvement in elite educational institutions and centralised health services. The Church, according to the author, will have to give up a mere reformist approach and clearly opt for a revolutionary path, not being afraid of conflict and violence if it is necessary to face the violent unjust structures. He gives hopeful examples

from statements of some Latin American Bishops and certain programmes directed to bring about radical social change. The Church needs to develop a prophetic awareness as well as prophetic action. The Church in India with its implicit involvement in the present system must make a definite option for the weaker sections of society.

While one may agree with the overall thrust of the author's presentation, he may be faulted for some generalisations which perhaps are inevitable in a brief and, for that matter, 'prophetic' exposé. It is true, for instance that health care should be more and more community based and stress the preventive aspect. But the continued need for some big hospitals would become evident if we observe their patronage by most votaries of social change. It seems to the present reviewer that social analysis is quite incomplete if it does not take into account factors like an outmoded legal system and the all-pervading influence of neo-colonial structures. The place of big industry in the fertiliser, power and other fields needs to be studied more carefully. Still, there is no doubt that this booklet will be of much use in provoking social awareness and stimulating Christians to fulfil their liberating role.

G. LOBO, S.J.

Marxism and the Religions of India. Spirit and Matter. Edited by Clarence O. McMULLEN. Delhi, I.S.P.C.K., 1979. Pp. 117. Rs 15.

Marxism and religion both claim to further the welfare of man. However, Marxism with its materialistic philosophy is a challenge to religion with its primarily spiritual outlook. The resultant tension can be viewed in terms of irreducible opposition or as an opportunity for deepening the values of either. These eight papers on the relationship of Marxism to Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity and Islam are meant to promote a dialogue between the two. Each religion is represented by two papers, one dealing with continuities and the other discontinuities with Marxism. It is interesting to note that even the papers dealing with discontinuities acknowledge some points of convergence.

There is no doubt that this work is a valuable contribution to an important subject. The papers are well written by competent writers. Still, the expositions of various religious viewpoints cannot be considered standard. For instance, K. P. Palta who deals with the continuities between Hinduism and Marxism is a

committed Marxist and sees Hinduism solely through the vision of this ideology. Dr Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia adopts the extremist Akali view of Sikh society as a separate nation. Such a theocratic position should not have found a place in a Christian-sponsored work.

The lessons to be drawn from the reflections in the papers are presented in the introduction by the editor. The interaction between religion and Marxism necessitates a redefinition of both. Marxism draws attention to an aspect of human existence with which religion is supposed to be concerned, but in reality has often failed to be. The concerns emphasized by the Marxian ideology have been present in some religions from the very beginning. They need to be rediscovered and interpreted in the context of modern situations and problems. On the other hand, religion alone can explain the purpose of life and provide answers to the problems of death and suffering, of freedom and authority. Thus religion can humanize Marxism and add to it a dimension without which it will remain incomplete and ineffective in dealing with the totality of the human situation.

G. LOBO, S.J.

Hinduism

Radhakrishnan on Hindu Moral Life and Action. By Aloysius MICHAEL. Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 1979. Pp. xv-226. Rs 65.

The book is the fruit of an accurate and painstaking analysis of the moral ideas of Hinduism as presented and interpreted by Dr Radhakrishnan, one of the best modern exponents of Hinduism to the West.

The idea of an ethical system in Hinduism is often dismissed with the remark that it presents a morality with no systematised knowledge of ethical questions. This work shows that there is, dispersed in Hinduism, an awareness of systematic ethics, even though not ex professo codified in any single work. The author presents the critical ethical reflections of Dr Radhakrishnan with order and clarity.

The first chapter deals with Hindu anthropology under the aspect of man, the moral agent. In chapter two, the author makes a survey of the moral teaching of the Hindu scriptures as explained by Radhakrishnan. The author takes care to show that virtues and vices are not arbitrarily defined but are based on an objective order, the *satya* of things.

Morality is shown to be related to God and one's salvation. In chapter three, he examines the Hindu understanding of moral action, and its evaluation in the scriptures where talk of moral action is of parenetic nature. Chapter four systematises the various meanings of *dharma* present in Hinduism and shows its evolution. Since Hinduism is a way of life, the concept of *dharma* is basic to it. As Radhakrishnan says: "What counts is conduct and not belief" (p. 128); this is *sanātana dharma*. Chapter five examines the relation of *dharma* to *mokṣa*, which one would call *mokṣa-dharma*. In chapter six the author puts Hindu ethics in dialogue with Christian ethics. Such a dialogue is already present in Radhakrishnan's comparative study itself. The salvation ethics (*mokṣadharma*) of both Hinduism and Christianity are shown to have the same way of relating moral striving to salvation. Coming to the difficult point of ethical norms in Hinduism, the author points to *dharma* as "the first and unifying principle in the Hindu system of morality" (p. 171); for *dharma* expresses the non-arbitrariness and law-abidingness of all nature, and of human nature in particular. He also observes that motivation for moral action differs according to different religious faiths. This, however, is a very inadequate account of the contribution of faith to morality. Christian faith not only gives to the Christian a new perspective and vision, and thereby motives for action, but the new relationship he has entered into influences every moral decision he makes. Motivation is too general a term to express the whole reality. This remark notwithstanding, the author deserves to be congratulated on his contribution to the study of Hindu ethics. The value of the study is enhanced by the fact that it has been carried out in dialogue with Christian ethics — a desideratum for a country like India.

S. AROKIASAMY, S.J.

Traditional Hinduism and Social Development. By N. Murugesu MUDALIAR. Madras, The Christian Literature Society, 1978. Pp. v-48. Rs 3.

This book offers a short review of traditional Hinduism with reference to social development, its potentialities, its strengths and weaknesses. The author takes issue with *varnadharma* as a real obstacle to social development because of the religious sanctions that go with it and the historical and cultural rigidity

Continued on p. 86

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MARCH 1980

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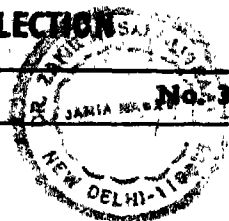
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In This Issue

The current year, 1980, marks the 400th anniversary of the arrival of three Jesuits at Akbar's Court in Fatehpur Sikri, where they had come from Goa at the request of the emperor himself. It would be preposterous to surround the celebration of this centenary with Church—or Jesuit—triumphalism. But to pause and ask ourselves what is the significance of that event for us today, is not. Times and circumstances have changed, and with them mission too and missionary approaches have evolved. To size up the changes is by itself a salutary exercise. And, while paying tribute to gallant men who were led by the limited light of their time, to learn from their mistakes is even more salutary. Fr P. JACKSON helps us to do this. He shows that the impact made by the Mughal mission is found where it was, perhaps, least expected: not in the conversion of the Emperor that failed, but in simple witness.

To have learnt the lesson is one thing; to act accordingly is another. One sign of the vitality of Christian mission today is the search for new modes of Christian presence. Fr C. VALLES, who a few years ago explained to our readers his "City Apostolate" (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1975, pp. 445-451), now returns to the same. Jesus comes through to people in our act of sharing with them their day-to-day life, their joys and sorrows, their problems and aspirations. The contrast between the story at Akbar's Court and in Hindu families of Ahmedabad will not fail to strike our readers. Both are symbolic of very different styles of mission.

In the second instalment of his article on "Christians and Development in India Today", Fr W. FERNANDES reviews the part which in recent years Diocesan and National Organizations have played in development. He concludes in pointing out what limitations remain to be overcome in order that the Church's involvement may become more effective, in line with a sound policy of participative development.

Unlike Synod 1974 on Evangelization to which we paid much attention both before and after the event, the 1977 Synod of Bishops on Catechesis has so far passed unnoticed in our pages. To remedy this lacuna, we are now offering an elaborate presentation of the Apostolic Exhortation on Catechesis, recently published. Fr E. DALY comments on the Document in the light of the Synodal event.

Christians and Development in India Today

(continued)

Walter FERNANDES, S.J.

Diocesan Organisations

Another recent development is institutionalisation of what was till then individual voluntary initiative. Caritas Internationalis was followed by other funding agencies starting with Misereor, founded in 1959 to channel the German Bishops' Lenten Campaign collections. These agencies would channel funds for definite development programmes, not merely as aid to missionaries. Such institutionalisation would create the need of similar organisations in India itself, since one of the criteria in financing projects was their continuity. Slowly, also the dioceses would have to face this situation and set up organisations that would be legal holders of development projects in their area. Co-ordination and control of development activity would be their main purpose. The 1969 Church in India Today Seminar felt that there was lack of co-ordination between the Church-oriented development agencies and that there should be diocesan as well as national organisations for this purpose.

The basic requirement for these development councils is a strong representation of competent lay people who should form the majority. The work of these councils should be to survey, assess, plan, implement and evaluate the socio-economic activities of the dioceses.¹⁸

Some dioceses had started working in this direction even before the seminar and in the 1970's they tried out "package programmes" or what can be called integrated area development programmes as against the individual piecemeal projects. They started by making a study of the local socio-economic situation, the type of people, their culture and their resources, and drew up development plans for relatively large areas. Among them can be mentioned the Vijayapuram and Mananthavady dioceses in Kerala, Kottar in Tamilnadu,

18. *Church in India Today*. All India Seminar (Bangalore 1969), New Delhi, CBCI Centre, p. 266.

Berhampur in Orissa and Raigarh in Madhya Pradesh. The last two in particular have developed a community health system based on popular participation and local techniques. Like the experiments of Dr Arole these too can become replicable models in many areas that are searching for alternatives to the present health systems. The main feature of the Kottar system is a health insurance scheme destined for the poor. At Berhampur the most important aspect may be the training of village level health workers developed by a local team in co-operation with the Indian Social Institute Mobile Orientation and Training Team (ISI-MOTT)—the type of training that has proved successful at Kumberi (Raigarh).

The next step of co-ordination between the diocesan societies is being taken in some places. One may mention in particular the Andhra Pradesh Social Service Society (APSSS) founded in 1977. Initially it was hoped that it would be a co-ordinating body for evaluation of project proposals and to channel all funds coming into Andhra Pradesh from foreign funding agencies. Because of resistance in some circles, this goal could not be achieved—a fact which probably turned out to be the salvation of the Society. In co-ordination with national bodies like the Indo-German Social Service Society (IGSSS—the trustee of Misereor in India) and the ISI-MOTT, it slowly became the training body for priests in Andhra, involved in socio-economic development projects. It has now become the main group encouraging non-formal education in the State, instead of taking the form of a financial controller which it had originally intended to be.

Caritas-India has decided to encourage such regional initiatives and has delegated part of its decision-making power to dioceses and to the provincial hierarchies or agencies formed by them. One feature of most of these diocesan societies is that, though priests are in charge of them, a great deal of initiative is delegated to professional groups and to lay persons.

National Organisations

Institutionalisation had started at the national level already in the early 1960's. Caritas-India was formed in 1959. The Indian Social Institute (founded in 1951), which was till then principally an institute of research, successfully put some of its findings into practice in a few projects from 1961 onwards. Misereor and a few other West European funding agencies that had watched this success requested the institute to help them in their work by making feasibility studies of the project proposals that came to them from India. Thus the ISI-

Extension Service (ISI-ES) started making pre-financing feasibility studies for a dozen agencies, but without entering into financing. The IGSSS was founded towards the end of the decade to be the trustee of Misereor; today it also makes study of project proposals and promotes development. Other agencies like CRS and Oxfom have their counterparts in India. Training centres such as the one in Bangalore would follow, to prepare project sponsors.

After two decades of work, the national organisations are in the process of evaluating their work. One of their conclusions is that, left to themselves, Church-related agencies can do much good to many groups since a certain amount of expertise has been built up over the years and there are many committed individuals and groups involved in development. But they also feel that unless a conscious effort is made, they can unintentionally become instrumental in intensifying regional or group imbalances. The reason for this anomaly is that most of the projects are initiated by priests and sisters or by dioceses. South India which has 25% of India's population has over 70% of its Catholics. As a result, most Church-related projects come from these States that are relatively better developed. The following table gives an indication of that regional imbalance, though the picture it draws is only partial due to the fact that, while from 1968 to 1973 all the projects financed by ten agencies are mentioned, from 1974 to 1979 only those studied by ISI-ES (not those of IGSSS and Caritas) are recorded. But these agencies show a similar picture.

Thus the national bodies feel the need of co-ordinating at least part of their work, and of taking active interest in promoting development in North India instead of merely waiting for persons from the field to send requests. The IGSSS has been organising diocesan level seminars to make the priests and nuns aware of the possibilities. Caritas-India trained some professional animators in 1978 to aid the Northern dioceses to organise small projects with the hope that this will enable the clergy and the laity of the region to acquire some expertise in this field. The ISI-ES which was one of the agencies that helped the diocesan package programmes, is now trying to identify committed individuals and organisations in the North and to help some dioceses to set up development-oriented organisations.

An important feature of many of these efforts is experimentation with new methods of development. Out of about 3000 projects financed all over India by ten financing agencies (see table 2) between 1968 and 1973 only 40 were in the field of non-formal education, while more than 600 were in technical, scientific and academic

Table 2: State-wise Distribution of Population and Catholics (1976) and of Development Projects (1968-1979)¹⁹

State or Zone	State Population 1976		Total Number of Projects		
	Population in millions (percentage)	Catholics (percentage)	1968-73 (financed by 10 agencies)	1974-76 (studied by ISI-ES)	1977-79 (studied by ISI-ES)
Andhra	47.59 (7.88)	591,178 (6.54)	348 (11.69)	153 (18.27)	171 (14.45)
Karnataka	32.21 (5.33)	542,844 (6.01)	240 (8.06)	38 (4.54)	96 (8.13)
Kerala	23.74 (3.93)	3,293,010 (36.43)	418 (14.05)	162 (19.35)	271 (22.95)
Pondicherry & Tamil Nadu	45.63 (7.56)	1,746,856 (19.33)	574 (19.29)	219 (26.16)	307 (25.99)
<i>Total South</i>	149.17 (24.09)	6,173,885 (68.30)	1580 (53.1)	572 (68.3)	845 (71.55)
Goa	0.95 (0.16)	368,150 (4.08)	36 (1.21)	6 (0.68)	— (1.27)
Gujarat	30.03 (4.97)	83,390 (0.92)	60 (2.01)	6 (0.68)	10 (0.84)
Maharashtra	55.89 (9.25)	677,619 (7.45)	311 (10.45)	42 (5.01)	41 (3.47)
Rajasthan	28.76 (4.76)	20,245 (0.23)	59 (1.98)	9 (1.07)	2 (0.17)
<i>Total West</i>	115.63 (19.14)	1,145,884 (12.68)	466 (15.6)	63 (7.5)	68 (5.71)
Delhi & N. West	39.81 (6.59)	56,517 (0.63)	99 (3.32)	10 (1.19)	18 (1.52)
Madhya Pradesh	46.81 (7.75)	310,926 (3.44)	164 (5.51)	33 (3.94)	70 (5.93)
Uttar Pradesh	95.79 (15.86)	46,395 (0.51)	145 (4.87)	38 (4.54)	31 (2.62)
<i>Total North & North West</i>	182.41 (30.20)	413,838 (4.58)	403 (13.7)	81 (9.6)	119 (10.08)
Bihar	61.46 (10.18)	477,345 (5.28)	204 (6.85)	64 (7.64)	47 (3.98)
Orissa	24.22 (4.01)	195,516 (2.16)	67 (2.25)	9 (1.07)	20 (1.69)
W. Bengal	49.56 (8.21)	262,566 (2.90)	96 (3.22)	21 (2.5)	31 (2.62)
<i>Total East</i>	135.24 (22.40)	935,427 (10.35)	367 (12.3)	94 (11.2)	98 (8.30)
Assam & N. East	21.31 (3.53)	369,681 (4.09)	56 (1.88)	27 (3.22)	51 (4.32)
Laccadives, Andaman	0.24 (0.04)	?	—	—	—
Not Specified	—	—	96 (3.22)	—	—
INDIA	604.00 (100.00)	9,038,715 (100.00)	2975 (100.00)	837 (100.00)	1181 (100.00)

19. Sources: *Census of India* 1971, Vol. 1 A, Abstract Statistics Part I, p. 20, Table 17: Quinquennial Projection of Population 1966-1981; François HOUTART et al., *The Development Projects as a Social Practice of the Catholic Church in India*, Louvain 1976, Table 4, pp. 46-47; Documentation of the Indian Social Institute, Extension Service, New Delhi; *Catholic Directory of India*, New Delhi, CBCI Centre, 1977.

education, mostly in the form of buildings and equipment. Only about 60 were in community health (i.e. prevention, nutrition, hygiene and health education leading to community development), while over 400 were for the medical institutions. Only about 50 were in housing and about 60 in community development. There was slight improvement during the three years that followed. Out of 311 educational projects studied by the ISI-ES in the 1974-76 period, about 50 were of the non-formal type. Of the 158 health projects studied or promoted during these years, nearly a fourth were of the community health type.

The last three years show considerable progress. Non-formal education has about 60 out of the 342 educational projects and community health was at least a component in about 100 out of the 218 health projects — many of them promoted by the ISI-ES itself, but one can expect the experience of IGSSS and Caritas to have been similar. Even in technical and other formal educational projects there sometimes is a component of non-formal education aimed at those who cannot benefit from the formal course — though at times these elements are added only on paper to make an otherwise institutional project acceptable.

A new element that is catching up is social housing, i.e., the use of housing as an entry point for community organisation. Some such projects are promoted by the national organisations while most come from professionals in the field who are trying out alternate systems of development. The health projects are mostly from religious Sisters, the non-formal educational type mostly from priests and youth groups inspired by their religious advisers, and the social housing projects are by and large from lay groups, most of them non-Christian. Groups conduct these projects not in order to solve individual problems such as housing or health, but as entry points for the process of the community's growth.

Another recent development is the realisation that the disinherited groups cannot be categorised into one class, such as "the poor" or the "oppressed". The type of underprivileged groups differs from place to place. The combination of factors of underdevelopment makes the oppressive situation in some groups more intense than in others. The domination-dependence factor exists between upper-lower castes, rich-poor classes, men-women, urban-rural areas, etc. Groups such as the rural scheduled caste women combine all these factors and are the most affected.²⁰ Consequently techniques of organisation and

20. H. R. TRIVEDI, *Scheduled Caste Women in India, Studies in Exploitation*, Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 1977.

approach cannot be uniform for all oppressed groups. While moving from the village to an urban slum may be progress for the man, it may mean deterioration for the woman. Hence the two situations — both of oppression — cannot be approached in the same way.²¹

Consequently, the agencies with a research component find it necessary to focus their attention on various groups in order to identify the components which intensify the exploitative situation of these groups. They feel that research on women, children or families in general does not help; rather, the factors making specific groups of women or children, for example, the most adversely affected need to be studied. Some institutions spend the major portion of their resources in such applied research.²² At least a few persons involved in development feel the need of such professional help in order to identify the real needs and to apply their expertise to their solution.

Taking into account all these programmes, we may say that those engaged in the socio-economic field feel that positive initiatives need to be taken to animate people to develop themselves. They know that technical change without the right human factor cannot be of much benefit to the underprivileged and may even intensify their disabilities.

Some Limitations

The present situation has however limitations that need to be attended to. Though many experiments are being tried, those involved in them form but a small minority. Most others follow the traditional pattern. Some of the limitations arise from the fact that most of the personnel involved in socio-economic development in Church-related projects are priests and nuns. Very few married lay persons with a family can enter into development because family salaries are beyond the means of most voluntary agencies. Hence priests and sisters, who are either maintained by their religious superiors or can live on a much smaller salary, abound in the field. Many projects which would not otherwise survive are thereby made viable.

However, the fact that mostly the clergy are engaged in development creates its own problems. They are principally pastors who take up development because their people expect them to be their leaders

21. Andrea M. SINGH, "Women and the Family, Coping with Poverty in the Delhi Slums", *Social Action*, July-September 1977, pp. 244-246.

22. The Indian Social Institute has been doing one such research project every year. Three recently published are: A. M. SINGH, *Migrant Women in the Slums of Delhi*, Delhi, Manohar Book Service, 1980; A. M. SINGH, *Urban Development, A Trend Report*, Delhi, Manohar Book Service, 1980; A. DE SOUZA, *Day Care for Underprivileged Urban Children*, New Delhi, Concept Publishing House, 1979.

and to show them the way in this field also. They have a good philosophical and theological background, but may be lacking the analytical training required for the task of identifying the various factors involved in development. Besides they often lack the professional training required for the implementation of projects. Consequently, they may see only individual problems, i.e. economical, health, cultural, religious, etc., and may fail to see the linkages between these various aspects as well as the economical, social, structural and political implications of their inputs. Consequently, many income generating projects for example do not come up to a high level or there may be little scope for people's organisations, because the priests who set them up are often unaware of the linkages between various factors.

Similarly, the fact that the priest is the leader of the community also creates problems. He is expected to be a uniting factor, not a divisive element in his parish. Thus, if he sees injustice among his people, he may not always be able to bring it to their notice for fear of being accused of taking sides between groups. If he does not speak out, he runs the risk of being accused of identifying himself with the rich and the exploiters.

Moreover, being first and foremost a pastor, i.e., a leader of the Christian community, the priest easily confines himself to Christian or Catholic circles. In the process he may fail to see the possibilities of collaboration with other local groups, the government agencies, the banks and others. He may think only in terms of the progress of his own community and, as a result, his development plans may be parallel to those of the government. He may unconsciously use foreign funds to supplant local resources instead of supplementing them, thus creating an island of prosperity instead of replicable models of development.

All these limitations are probably linked with the fact that the Church is entering the field of development as a religious group for which it may not be the primary concern.

In taking the initiative for development projects, the Church enters a field which is not specific to her: she intervenes in the socio-political domain which is under the more immediate responsibility of the Indian State and which possesses its own laws of functioning.²³

Under certain circumstances this may be an advantage, for it may aid project promoters to become agents of social change without involving themselves with the dominant systems. But such a stance requires an analytical ability which many of those in the field lack.

23. François HOUTART, *The Development Projects* . . . , p. 32.

Consequently they may enter into parallel development without studying the inter-linkages.

Another limitation of a non-professional approach may be financial irregularities. Recently an article in a secular weekly accused many Catholic priests of having embezzled development funds, since their accounts were not in order.²⁴ A deeper study of the instances mentioned in the paper shows that a few of them were genuine cases of deception, but most were the result of mismanagement by amateurs in the field — a failure to keep accounts in a businesslike manner and the consequent misinterpretation by those opposed to them. This too is the result of persons without proper training getting into the field of development purely out of good will.

Conclusion

To put it briefly, the Indian Church possesses a good infra-structure that has evolved during the last two decades and is continuously on the increase. A few persons who do not merely act but also reflect take new initiatives in the field and help others to live according to their commitment to the poor by bringing the benefits of development close to the weakest sections.

However, if the Church's development action is to become more effective, its personnel needs to acquire expertise, without falling into over-professionalisation. It must find new ways where development is understood as a process that takes people in their group to lead them towards growth, as a community and within their environment. This requires men of commitment who act and reflect together. Besides, development is not the preserve of one group, whether priests or lay persons. While it is important to avoid the danger of development work giving a new lease of life to clericalism, it is equally important not to get lost in power conflicts such as the present competition between priests and the laity easily leads to.

What is required is the identification of persons committed to the poorest and the impartment to them of proper training. A healthy link will have to be found between professional expertise and practical work in the field.

Similarly a way must be found to involve committed lay persons in development. Groups such as university students with idealism and commitment offer here a possibility. They often tend to take a revolutionary stance and the institutions to which they belong may feel threatened by some of their extremist postures. But if, instead

24. "Carrying on with Caritas Cash", *Onlooker*, January 16-31, 1979, pp. 46-47.

of being rejected, such idealism could be accepted as an essential element in their process of growing and in the healthy evolution of society, their youthful zeal could be harnessed for development of rural communities, at least for a few years after their studies when they can still afford to take risks and live on a meagre salary. They could become important agents of social change in the country as a whole.

However, from a long term point of view there is no alternative to committed and professionally capable lay persons getting involved in this work. Unfortunately, funding agencies abroad as well as many voluntary agencies in India seem to think that a professional can maintain his family on a near-starvation salary, often without long term security. The number of such committed men is small, and most of them fail to enter into this field because of their unwillingness to make their families victims to their commitment. As long as such obstacles exist, one cannot expect the growth of a good development cadre.

Besides, voluntary development will have to be brought out of its "Christian" surroundings, and means found to integrate it with development in the country as a whole, without, however, it becoming a tool in the hands of those in power. The role of voluntary agencies will have to be understood as that of organising and educating the disinherited groups so as to enable them to demand their rightful share in the process of development; not as competition with other agencies or government. Foreign aid should not be allowed to supplement local resources as it sometimes does. In other words, the main role of a voluntary agency is not to develop the whole country but to originate replicable models which others can follow. Every aspect of such programmes may not be replicable but only a few. The relationship between active local groups, the government, the banks, etc., may be one such replicable element on which new experiments will have to be tried out — without becoming tools in the power game.

Finally, another challenge consists in finding ways of integrating social action with religion. The history of India shows that no major social change can occur in this country unless it is given a religious interpretation. The social reform and freedom movements, for example, remained somewhat marginal till the religio-cultural revival initiated by Gokhale, Tilak and others at the turn of the century and the major re-interpretation made by Mahatma Gandhi.²⁵ Similar observations can be made about the Bhakti and other movements.

25. For more on this see: K.P. KARUNAKARAN, *Religion and Political Awakening in India*, Meerut, Meenakshi Prakashan, 1969, p. 40; K. K. DATTA, *Renaissance, Nationalism and Social Change in Modern India*, Calcutta, 1965, pp. 15-22.

Today however, Christians in India seem to maintain a dichotomy between the social and the religious field. Apart from the uncertainty about the meaning of evangelisation in the socio-economic field, one notices two parallel trends among them. On the one hand, there are spiritualist movements, like the Charismatic movement and that for Indian spirituality, which seem to underestimate involvement in the material world. On the other hand, most of those involved in the social field tend to take a purely secular approach. A few groups, for example the AICUF, are trying to integrate social and religious values, kept apart for many years, with, among a few, even a tendency to treat religion as a bourgeois phenomenon. They have met with only limited success. But these efforts need to be encouraged if those social movements are to produce valid results. Just as among Latin American theologians there are those today who are prepared to use popular religion as a means of social change instead of relying only on an elitist approach, similarly in India agents of social change have to find ways of making their social message relevant to the majority who still give importance to religious values in their daily life.

To conclude, much reflection is required on the meaning of development, understood not principally as technical inputs and economic improvement, but as the process by which people grow as a group in their environment. This will enable the Church better to live up to its mission and commitment to the poor in imitation of him who gave himself up for his people and redeemed them by becoming one of them.

Jesuits at the Mughal Court

Paul JACKSON, S.J.

FOUR hundred years ago, on the 28th February, 1580, three Jesuits, Rudolf Aquaviva, Antonio de Monserrate and Francisco Henriquez, arrived at Akbar's court in Fatehpur Sikri. They had been sent from Goa in answer to Akbar's explicit request for some Jesuit priests to be sent to teach him the Law of Christ. Although the Church authorities in Goa were very suspicious about the whole affair, they ultimately decided to accede to the Mughal Emperor's request, arguing that the mission could lead to great advances for the Christian Church or, at worst, provide it with three new martyrs. Thus the mission was imbued, from the very beginning, with a "do or die" spirit that persisted at least until the return of Fr Jerome Xavier in 1614.

It is not the purpose of this article to provide an account of those years, fascinating though they be, but to reflect on the mission, carried out in three phases, in more pastoral and theological terms. Some people may prefer to commemorate such an event by highlighting more the "romance" and "splendour" of the whole enterprise — aspects by no means lost on the present writer — but it seems a more fitting tribute to attempt to learn from what these zealous men thought and did, for they surely have much to teach not merely their fellow-Christians but all men who take their religion seriously.

It is instructive to reflect, for a moment, on the purpose of the mission, for it has both pastoral and theological aspects. Nobody, either in Goa or in Fatehpur Sikri, doubted the prime aim of the priests sent on the Mughal Mission — to convert the Emperor to Christianity! Aquaviva and his companions understood clearly that this was what their superiors expected of them. Judged in view of this clear-cut mission, the priests obviously failed to achieve their declared aim.

It is instructive to examine the pastoral — in a broad sense — presuppositions behind this venture. The Jesuits were perfectly familiar with the European scene of sixteenth-century religious discord and had a lively appreciation of the important, often crucial, role played by the king: *cuius regio, eius religio* was, very often, only

too true. Conditions in India, however, were quite different from those in Europe where many sincere people could understandably pledge allegiance to what was presented as a "reformed" Church where Christ's position was absolutely central. It would be quite another matter for an ordinary Muslim, however, to reject the Quran as the "Word of God" and Muhammad as "the Apostle of God" in order to embrace Jesus Christ as "the Son of God". That would be a far too radical change to expect of them, even if their king took the step. If, for argument's sake, it was conceded that the king did embrace Christianity and his Muslim subjects did so too — a supposition very difficult for anyone familiar with the Islamic revival of Ahmad Sirhindi and Abdul Haqq Dehlavi to imagine, much less concede — the fact remains that the vast majority of the king's subjects, the Hindus, would remain unaffected by such a move.

To be sure, Akbar's conversion would have had an impact on many of his Muslim subjects, but nothing like that which the priests were dreaming about.

Such an aim also presents us with theological difficulties. Surely it is the Church's constant teaching that faith is one of the theological virtues and that it is a gift of God? When Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God", Jesus replied: "Simon, son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven" (Mt 16, 16-17). If faith in Jesus Christ is a gift of the Father, it is not the end-product of human activity. This means that it cannot, in all logic, be the aim of human activity. An inescapable consequence of this is that it is inadmissible to have conversion to faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and one's Saviour as the aim of any mission enterprise. The only legitimate aim of a Christian mission is to try to discern the real needs of others and provide some service to alleviate those needs. Children need a good education which Christian schools attempt to provide; the sick need medical care, and Christian hospitals and dispensaries strive to provide that care. At the moment people are realizing more and more that something should be done to ensure that backward sections of the community have greater opportunities for advancement, and this is leading to various forms of social activities by Christians. "Freeing the oppressed" was one of the tasks Jesus specifically mentioned he was anointed to perform.

It is quite distressing to see Christians sometimes convert — perhaps "prostitute" would be a better word — a genuine human need into an opportunity to "evangelize", in the narrowest sense of that word. For example, some natural calamity overtakes a group

of people who lose everything they have, through earthquake, fire, flood or famine, and stand in need of food, clothing, shelter, medical supplies and, above all, compassion and loving support. A group of Christians rush to meet these needs to the best of their ability and are quite embarrassed to find other Christians there with nothing but free literature. This is not meant as an argument against Christian literature but to point out that it has its place, that of meeting a felt need. It is quite possible that many people who have been helped by a group of Christians in time of great distress would like to learn more about a religion that inspires such dedicated service and would ask for some literature or some instruction. In such circumstances it can, indeed, should, be provided.

This was precisely what Akbar had asked for. He had no material needs but had begun, for various reasons, to make a personal inquiry into what it all meant, what life was all about. Islam, Hinduism and so on claimed that they knew what life was about and afforded an ultimate explanation of human existence. Akbar listened to them, but wanted to hear more. This "more" included the Christian view of life. In order to ascertain what this was he invited the authorities in Goa to send some Jesuit priests to his court, requesting them to instruct him in the "Law of Christ", as he put it. The Jesuits were thus provided with a golden opportunity to expound, to the best of their ability, this "Law of Christ" and thus meet a felt need of the Mughal Emperor. Instead of having this exposition as their clear-cut and perfectly laudable aim, they switched over to aiming at Akbar's conversion. In this they exceed both Akbar's request and their own powers, for conversion meant acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and Son of God, but this faith comes not from "flesh and blood" but "from my Father in heaven".

Much of what the Jesuits did was distorted because of the aim they had proposed for their mission. For example, in Fatehpur Sikri the "real business" began on the 3rd March, 1580, with the first of the religious discussions. The priests did a good job of expounding reasons for the authenticity of the Old and the New Testaments in the light of the standard Muslim assertion of deliberate corruption, but then moved on to attack the "fallacies and falsehoods" of the Quran, using such language as to impel Akbar to take them aside afterwards and advise moderation in their speech. They agreed to do so out of obedience to the king, but not because they were afraid of "speaking the truth". On the 6th the priests condemned the Quran's graphic picture of paradise and, a few days later, the priests "contrasted the purity of life of Jesus with the irregularities of the life of Muhammad;

and also the purity of the Christian Law and the holiness of those who spread it, compared to the fables and inconsistencies of the Law of Muhammad, spread by the sword." There was no doubt that Akbar was impressed by the arguments of the priests, while Abul Fazl's comment that "the mullahs brought forward the old, received assertions and did not attempt to arrive at the truth by reasoning" is an indication of his opinion about who was "winning".

It is clear that, far from keeping to their mandate of expounding the Law of Christ, the Jesuits had launched into a full-scale attack upon the Quran, Muhammad and Islam as a religion. In order to do so, they made excellent use of a Portuguese translation of the Quran in their possession, submitting it to a rigorously logical examination with rather devastating results. The mullahs had no comparable knowledge of the Bible, nor had they undergone the rigorous training in syllogistic debate that the priests had. Added to this was division of opinion within their own ranks, in stark contrast to the united front presented by the Jesuits. They knew they had won the debates and were confident that, having demolished — as they thought — the position of their adversaries, the next step was sure to be Akbar's formal acknowledgement of their victory followed by a humble request for further instruction and baptism. Little did they realize that a large part of Akbar's enjoyment was in simply watching the whole performance, enjoying the debate very much as he enjoyed watching gladiatorial combats or the encounters of his fighting elephants! He positively relished seeing some of the Muslim divines "eating humble pie". Yet, over and above all this, he was also disappointed, for the Christian Padres showed abundant signs of a dogmatic narrow-mindedness which had become so distasteful to him. By seeking, and even gaining victories, the zealous priests were ruining their whole campaign.

Looking back over the years he had spent on the Mughal Mission, Jerome Xavier, the man who laboured most painstakingly in it, "noticed how easily Muslims could be convinced by reasonable arguments without thereby abandoning their own faith".¹ Moreover, he had to confess, after eighteen years of labour, that "he had never converted a Muslim by means of persuasion or reasoning".² Du Jarric, making use of original material, records in 1610 that "in conversion of souls there was not so much progress in this land of the Saracens, who are as hard as diamonds to work upon".³ He also gives us a clear idea

1. CAMPS, Arnulf, O.F.M., D.D., "Jerome Xavier S.J. and the Muslims of the Moghul Empire", *Nouvelle revue de science missionnaire*, 1957, p. 212.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

3. DU JARRIC, Pierre S.J. *Akbar and the Jesuits*, London, George Routledge and Sons Ltd, 1926, p. 173.

of what the Jesuits themselves thought about the success of their mission in these words: "As to the primary purpose of the Fathers, which was the conversion of the infidels. . . , on the one hand they contemplate so vast a wilderness of Islam and Paganism and despair of attaining their goal and feel the time and labour spent preparing a soil so barren might be employed to more profit elsewhere."⁴

These remarks indicate a slight shift in the Father's "aim". Having clearly failed to convert either Akbar or his son, Jahangir, they shifted their aim to "lesser" folk: in a word, to anybody they could manage to convert. The above remarks show clearly the sense of frustration they felt even on this score, not forgetting the fact of the occasional convert here and there referred to in their writings. This frustration can be traced directly to their failure to achieve their aim of conversion, an aim which is *ultra vires* of human activity, according to the argument of this article. It is, to say the least, sad to see people frustrated because they have failed to achieve the impossible ! This is particularly so in view of the fact that these Jesuit missionaries were explicitly invited to explain, to the best of their ability, their Christian faith. There was no dearth of opportunities to talk about Christ and his Law. Jerome Xavier, for example, would spend three or four days at a time in religious discussions, often being on his feet half the day or for the entire night ! In addition to this, people often came flocking to the Jesuit church in Agra to see the crib or some new religious painting that had arrived from Europe. We are told, for example, that up to 14,000 people a day came to see the crib for a period of forty days. Even granting possible exaggeration, the fact is that enormous crowds did come, and the priests let them in turn by turn, a group of women first and then the men, and they explained the figures in the crib to them. In 1601 a new picture of Our Lady was hung up. That same evening 2,000 people came to see the picture !⁵ The Fathers were amazed at the effect of the picture on those who came to see it and heard a short explanation of it. The Fathers counted 10,000 people a day, and they themselves had no free time to eat during the day.⁶ What a joy this must have been to them, to be able to talk freely about the virgin Mary, thus sharing, in an easy and acceptable manner, their own devotion with literally thousands of people. It is sad to think that, instead of rejoicing and thanking God for these and other opportunities to talk directly and acceptably about their Christian faith, the Fathers allowed clouds of frustration to overshadow them.

4. Ibid., p. 130.

5. Ibid., p. 161.

6. Ibid., p. 163.

Hidden away in the wealth of information provided about the Mughal Mission of the period under study, 1580-1614, is the following observation made by Arnulf Camps: "Most converts were attracted by the ceremonial activity of the Jesuits, e.g. their religious functions." The priests took great pains to celebrate the principal Christian feasts as elaborately and attractively as they could. It is also interesting to notice that the Jesuits were impressed by the way Muslims treated their dead, while the Muslims, in turn, were very moved by the reverent Christian ceremonial connected with funerals. It may come as quite a surprise to many to read that the actual converts of the period were not won over by rational argument, nor by Jerome Xavier's Persian writings, nor by any other "outreach" programme, but by the sight of the Christian community celebrating the Christian Mysteries together.

This fact may provide many with food for thought and prove to be a fruitful memorial to those gallant men who, four hundred years ago, were sent to the Mughal Court. Our gratitude for what they have to teach us, even by their mistakes, should be no less than our appreciation of their zealous enterprise.

7. CAMPS, A., op. cit., p. 226.

Report of the Standing Committee of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India. Bangalore, April 7-8, 1979. *New Delhi, CBCI Centre*, 1979. Pp. iv-63.

Report of the Standing Committee of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India. Ranchi, October 16, 18 and 19. *New Delhi, CBCI Centre*, 1980. Pp. 20.

Report of the General Meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India. Ranchi, October 17-25, 1979. *New Delhi, CBCI Centre*, 1980. Pp. 214.

The CBCI Centre, New Delhi, continues to ensure prompt publication of the reports of the Standing Committee Meetings and General Meetings of the episcopal conference. Reports of the three meetings held in 1979 are now available. As Standing Committee Meetings are to no small extent geared to preparing the material for the full assembly meetings, it will suffice to review the Report of the General Meeting held at Ranchi. Five main themes were taken up for study and discussion: Role of the Christian Family in the Contemporary World, in preparation for the 1980 Synod of Bishops in Rome; Evaluation of Liturgical Renewal; Pastoral Problems of Conversion; Theologising in India; Situation of the Church in India. The meeting finalised the communication of the CBCI to the Synod of Bishops on the family, to be held later

this year; the Report publishes the full text of this communication. The evaluation of liturgical renewal comes to an end with the approval by the General Assembly of the Report on the same subject offered to it by the Standing Committee; we have presented and commented on this document in VIDYAJYOTI, January 1980, pp. 31-36. The Report covers the discussions that took place in the assembly on Pastoral Problems of Conversion in the light of anti-conversion legislation. The elaborate presentation of the topic by Bishop Denzil D'Souza is printed in the volume; the same paper has been published in VIDYAJYOTI 1979, pp. 442-463. Theologising in India is presented by Archbishop Henry D'Souza in the context of the present efforts at inculturation and contextualisation. Under the heading "Situation of the Church in India" are mentioned areas of concern with regard to formation, education and pastoral activity. Besides the main themes just reviewed, the Report contains the usual section of Points from Commissions and Committees, and a section on Other Items of Importance. It also gives a Summary of Resolutions and Recommendations passed by the Assembly; these are listed according to the various authorities competent to deal with them. They testify to the vitality of the CBCI.

J DUPUIS, S.J.

Living with Hindus

Carlos VALLES, 1

FOR the past six years I have been living with Hindu families Ahmedabad, sharing fully their life, shifting houses every two weeks on an average, coming very close to some of them, at getting to understand their mentality and outlook on life. It has been quite an education for me. And they in turn have been influenced by my presence. I have already published two full books in Gujarati on my experiences in living from house to house, and many know this is my way of life. Some time back an American architect approached the mayor of the city for guidance to study the architecture of the old city wards, the walled city with narrow streets where the majority of the low middle class people still live and where I usually stay, and the mayor simply directed him to me as an 'expert', if not in architecture, at least in that life style which he wanted to study. We had some fruitful meetings.

Now I am reflecting on that experience of living with families, on what I am giving them and what I am learning from them. This is not a result of preconceived objectives, but a spontaneous outcome of my life with them. I have been reacting to the situations that presented themselves, and I find myself adopting an attitude which I now want to identify and describe. I can briefly do so by saying that what I bring to them in their houses and in their hearts by my living with them and talking with them is joy and faith in life. And that joy comes to me through my faith in God and in Christ whom I represent before them. Some people are truly contented, many just resigned to live, most are at some time or other discouraged, disillusioned, disappointed. What's the use of it all? Is life really worth living?—are recurring questions. Once I watched through many days the woman in a house doing most meritoriously all the daily chores of washing, cleaning, cooking, ironing... always with a long face, a tired body, and never a word without a complaint or a sigh. When the time came to fix my departure from that house, I told her with a mock serious face: "I will not leave your house until I see you smile once." By then she had got sufficiently fond of me to say spontaneously: "Then I'm not going to smile at all!" And she

actually smiled while saying it ! That smile was a symbol of what my presence in that house had done: to tell that woman for whom life was a drudgery and home a workshop, that I appreciated her work and prized her life. By seeing themselves loved and appreciated by someone, and explicitly told so, people come to recognize their own worth and regain joy.

Hindus like to repeat that we are living in Kaliyuga, the dark age where virtue is gone and lawlessness reigns; and that becomes in turn an excuse for despondency and despair. "We are living in Kaliyuga, what else can we expect?" That irks me. Reviling the present is blasphemy to me, as the present is God's ever new gift to me. I was delighted when I found these words of Shri Ramana Maharshi of Tiruvanamalai ashram (to me the greatest saint in modern India): "For the wise man every moment is Satyayuga." It is that attitude that I like to convey with my life and my presence. Every moment is the age of truth, the golden age, the happy sacrament of reality as it is, and it is great to live it. That is what Christ's resurrection means in practice to me. The fact that we are living in times of crisis is no objection to this attitude; on the contrary it is the very crisis that makes up the challenge and the thrill of living today. I spontaneously identify with Monica Furlong's quotation in John A. T. Robinson's *The New Reformation*?: "I cannot imagine a more enjoyable time to be a Christian, except possibly in the first few centuries of the Church." And I often paraphrase with Hindu friends Bernard Häring's prayer: "We thank you, Lord, for the earthquake. . .". This faith in life, in God, in myself, in Christ, in the world as it is and in things as they come — since all come from the hands of God — is the attitude I experience in myself and the mood I live in, and this communicates to others through personal contact. In that I see my basic work at present.

Close contact with families has sensitized me to the several 'oppressions' obtaining among them, and has strongly motivated me to work for liberation from them. There are many subtle and pernicious oppressions that take place in daily life and cause untold suffering in almost every home. Parents believe that they own their children, and manipulate them through guilt feelings into obedience and subjection. Even grown up children do not feel free to take up the study they like, marry the girl (or boy) they love, set up separate house even if advisable; and if they do so they feel guilty and almost hide like traitors. I have suffered in the house of a young man, gifted for the humanities but backward in science, as he plodded through science studies, passing or failing in despair, forced by his

parents who for prestige's sake wanted him to become a doctor. When he failed they branded him as the shame of the family, a bad son, a disgrace and cursed by God. And the boy has been conditioned to believe them, to consider himself a failure, an ungrateful son, and to feel guilty and accursed. Such a situation causes great moral harm. A similar situation, described in all literatures, and unfortunately very actual, is the oppression of daughters-in-law by their mothers-in-law. The cases go from the irritating to the laughable. In a house where I was, the mother-in-law had forbidden her daughter-in-law to smile in her presence and to laugh aloud in any part of the house where she could be heard. She had never smiled herself in her life, and to see her daughter-in-law smiling or to hear her laughing was unbearable to her. In another house the daughter-in-law could not sit, talk, read the newspaper or even drink water when the mother-in-law was present. Here the girl's husband himself told me about that and asked me for a remedy; but he refused to tell his mother anything or take any steps, as again he believed himself obliged to his mother for everything for ever. In such cases I do not interfere directly in the family's problems. I don't want to appear as though I were going from house to house to solve their problems. I am a guest, and the guest observes his 'atithi-dharma' and doesn't meddle in private affairs. But being a writer I use my pen to the utmost of my ability to denounce such situations (changing names and circumstances to avoid recognition) and ask for sheer justice. The articles I have already written in the Gujarati press about mothers-in-law would, if collected, form almost a whole book. It would certainly make a good wedding present.

Another source of much suffering in many families is the need to spend large and disproportionate amounts of money on the occasion of weddings and funerals. I had stayed fairly long with a modest family and observed their very simple style of life and poor daily meals. Every night day after day we had 'khichedi', with only occasionally a vegetable to relieve the monotony. It so happened that in those days they fixed their daughter's marriage and they began to mention in my presence the amounts that would be required for ornaments, clothes, meals, dowry. The figures added up to almost a lakh of rupees. I thought I had not understood properly. How could this family afford a lakh? They couldn't. They matter-of-factly explained to me how they would have to borrow, and the debt would weigh on them for the rest of their lives. Couldn't that possibly be avoided? They again explained to me: "We want our daughter to be happy. If we send her to her in-laws without proper dowry and

ornaments, they will harass her and make life impossible for her. So we want to provide her well, even if we suffer." Couldn't the in-laws understand ? Even if they would understand and condone the dowry, their society in turn would bring pressure on them and force them to exact it as all do. Few can escape this vicious grip of caste, custom and society. I saw the suffering of that girl whose marriage was being planned, as she realized the plight their parents were being plunged in for her sake. On the day when they brought home for her a gold necklace, she took it in her hands and wept. She would derive no joy from wearing it.

Then there is the smaller but daily and annoying oppression by petty officials in offices and business and shops. Red tape, delays, queues, bribes, bureaucracy, inefficiency. The common man suffers much inconvenience and downright harassment daily in such situations. Visit after visit to an office to get a document he needs and is entitled to, but which will not be given to him till after many entreaties and some money. Long queues in the sun to get a ticket or a ration. In one house the children worked by relays replacing each other in the hours-long queue; but when finally their turn was about to come, there was a stampede in the still long queue, stronger people grabbed the remaining provisions in the shop, and that family remained without its due. The children who had stood the long wait and were frustrated at the end, sat sad and angry at home that day. And I felt with them their sadness and anger. All these situations come through in my writings in a sustained campaign to concientize and motivate people against existing evils.

These sufferings are real, and to see them at close quarters makes me identify with the people who endure them. I value very much this experience, and it forms the basis of what I learn from them and get from them. That experience covers not only the hard part of suffering with them when they suffer, but also and very much the happy and positive part of being happy with them when they are happy, and of thus establishing personal intimate relationships which bring great joy to them and to me. This does not happen in all the houses I stay in. I let circumstances determine what relationship will follow, and I leave myself free to accept and develop a friendship when it spontaneously flowers. Here an interesting situation arises. Hindus, and even more Jains, look with suspicion upon relationships, which are part of 'maya' and strengthen it, thus delaying moksha. Abstinence is the creed. Don't hate. . .and don't love are parallel commandments. Avoid pleasure to avoid pain; forsake the pleasure of coming close together, in order to avoid the pain of having to separate. This is

popular ascetical practice, and I see it daily at work. A typical scene: a small lovely girl curls up in her big sister's arms and seducingly asks for caresses and kisses. Big sister stiffly draws back, disengages herself, sits the little girl in front, and lectures to her: "Don't be soft with me, and don't ask me to pet you. You see, one day, when I marry, I will have to leave this home. If you now grow fond of me, and I of you, then we'll suffer very much on that day when we separate. To avoid that, we must not show now any affection or love to each other. Understood?" I know well that attitude, and I watch it with amusement. And then I let human nature, which is stronger than ascetical convictions, have its way with them... and with me. That is, when mutual and spontaneous affection springs up between them and me, I accept it and let it grow. Once I was staying with an orthodox Jain family, and I got very fond of the two grown up boys in the house, and they of me. After some days, their father told me: "You seem to love my own children even more than I do. I know well all our doctrines and teachings, and your showing such affection to my boys is certainly against all our tenets. Yet, I want to tell you my own conviction that what you are doing is right, and that I have seen your life and I tell you with certainty that you will attain moksha at this very birth!" I treasured that testimony.

Children are a great source of joy to me. There was a lively five-year old in a house, who would sit by my side doing his 'lesson' while I did my writing, counting how many pages I was writing, how many corrections I was making, bringing me half a plantain when his mother gave him one, and defeating me at carroms whenever he got a chance. One night after supper I had to go out for a meeting, and he thought I was leaving the house for ever. He quietly went to the door and bolted it so that I could not leave. His mother explained to him that I was coming back that night itself, but he cried and cried and would not let me go. Finally I had to go, and I left. I came back from the meeting past midnight. And the little boy, who by eight o'clock was in bed every night, was standing at the door of the house waiting for me to come. He would not go to bed unless he made sure I had come back. I kissed him good night, and both of us slept contentedly. Next year his father unexpectedly died. When the little boy finally realized that "daddy was coming back no more", he told his mother: "Then why don't we call Father from the College to stay with us always? He is like daddy to me."

One of my articles that brought me most letters and positive reactions from readers was on another such simple situation. A boy in the house where I was, had injured his foot and could not walk to

school. They had no conveyance in that house, not even a cycle, and the boy did not want to miss school. On his own he approached me shyly and charmingly, and asked me whether I could take him on my cycle as I went to College. I agreed delighted. That was the chance of my life. I placed him lovingly on the bar of my cycle, protected him with my arms, steered him through the whirling Ahmedabad traffic, deposited him safely at the entrance of his school, promised to come to fetch him in the evenings. That was a large and well-known school in the city, and a teacher was at the gate welcoming the children. He knew me, and felt rather surprised to see me take a boy to school on my cycle. He could not keep back his curiosity, and asked me: "Who was that boy?" I mischievously answered: "He was my child". All that went into print in my column next Sunday paper under the title: "I Borrowed A Child". My feelings as a celibate entrusted for a day with a child as my own. It moved many readers, as I had been moved myself.

Very recently I went through a deep human experience with a family with whom I am very much identified. The parents were looking for a suitable match for their eldest daughter, a fine girl very close to me, and finally settled on a boy and fixed the wedding. I felt with them the pain and the satisfaction of the whole process. The anxiety when looking for candidates, the fear not to get a good one, the random uncertainty of the choice, the agony of the decision, the relief when the boy proved excellent, the hidden resentment of seeing another family taking over their own daughter, the final happiness to realize she was truly happy though no longer with them. The mother, an outstanding woman who lovingly and efficiently looked after all the home proceedings through those difficult days, was fully serene and composed while handling all matters, and would allow herself to break down and cry only when she was with me. I felt the departure of their daughter as though she were mine. I joined in all the rituals, and even danced lustily the traditional 'raas' the night before the wedding, when boys and girls face each other in two large fast moving circles, rhythmically beating the sticks in their hands against each other with graceful steps. I spent the long wedding day with them, ceremony after ceremony, letting myself into the mood of each moment as it came. When finally everything was over and the bride left with her new family, I stayed behind and quietly wept. An unknown man approached me at that moment and said with respect: "I am surprised to see tears in your eyes. Now I know why I like your books so much." Two days later I accompanied the girl's parents to the town where the boy's parents live and where they had invited us for a meal

together. There was genuine satisfaction in all, with mutual gratitude and joy. When the boy and the girl came to me together for the final blessing, I spontaneously and feelingly said: "I love both of you." They answered in unison: "And we both love you." It was beautiful.

Experiences like that mould me and bring out the best in me. Friendship brings joy, and joy is what ultimately all want, and the best witness to faith in God and in his providence. Once a truly exemplary Jain sadhu of great sanctity expressed a desire to see me. As his rules did not allow him to come and see me, a devotee of his, who is also an intimate friend of mine, took me to him. The visit was memorable. He was surrounded by other sadhus and nuns who were his disciples. When we arrived he had just completed the awesome six-monthly ritual of plucking with his own hands the hairs of his head and reducing himself to temporary baldness. I and my friend sat in the midst of them all, and for two hours a free and jovial exchange of questions and answers and experiences and even songs took place. I was at my best and enjoyed every minute of it. The presence by my side of a beloved friend gave me a joy and spontaneity which got through to all. After the long meeting, the sadhu, who has a great appreciation of me and actually makes propaganda for my books, gave me a long long wistful look in which there was a shade of wonder and regret, and asked me a question without expecting an answer: "How is it that after so many years of a life of renunciation and austerity, never once in my life have I experienced anything close to the joy and happiness that I see you experiencing before my very eyes today?" A pregnant silence followed, and we departed.

Here I now mention another important area in which I have learnt much and grown much through being in close contact with Hindu society. That is true appreciation of the great Indian religions, and natural empathy with their followers. I feel ecumenical in my bones. My Hindu friends are positive that in my previous birth I must have been a rishi in the Himalayas. Be that as it may, the fact is I do feel close to them, and true Hindu values are dear to me. I also have the full opportunity of seeing how they view us, of getting a genuine and true feedback on Church image and Christians in India. Their respect for Christ and for Christian institutions is great, and they often express it to me. On the negative side they are usually silent out of deference to me, but there is one point that hurts them very much, and they do mention it to me with greater or less vehemence. That is the relationship between money and conversions. They put it this way: "We know that much money has been used by missionaries in some areas in their work with the poor and illiterate. It is in those

same areas that conversions to Christianity have taken place. If there had been no money there would have been no conversions. We like the social uplift of the poor, and we appreciate the Christian spirit of service. It would be beautiful if you could do that service without the selfish motive of conversions. As it is, you are giving a bad name to your Church, you are spoiling the very witness of your service and dedication, and making it difficult for us to accept the genuine values you have of love and service of the poor." This criticism lies deep and strong in every Hindu heart, and it creates a lasting obstacle against Christianity. I assure them that the Church's teaching is clear, and quote to them the authoritative words of Vatican II (*Dignitatis Humanae*, 4): "In spreading religious faith... everyone ought at all times to refrain from any manner of action which might seem to carry a hint of coercion or of a kind of persuasion that would be dishonourable or unworthy, especially when dealing with poor or uneducated people. Such a manner of action would have to be considered an abuse of one's own right and a violation of the right of others." Those words impress them as very noble and proper, and they can hardly believe that they come from our highest ecclesiastical authority.

A field that is engaging my attention at present is the wrong ideas common at popular level about God and religion, the harm that they do to people and to the cause of religion itself. I am beginning to identify and study those wrong beliefs and to counteract them in my writings and talks. As I have regularly two weekly articles, one in each of the main Gujarati dailies of Ahmedabad and Bombay, two monthly articles in religious magazines, and two talks a month in All India Radio, I get full scope for that work, in which I see great religious value and service of the faith. I was concerned about the price of my books going higher and higher as a result of the high increases in the cost of paper. What had begun as two-rupee books cost now eight, and common people cannot afford them. Thus it was that a piece of news I got last week brought me joy. A group of Jains have formed themselves of their own initiative into an "Association of Friends of Father Valles", whose purpose is to make my books available at reduced prices to the common man. They have my full blessing.

While living with Hindus I take care to keep my Jesuit contacts very much alive. My best friends are Jesuits, and my full sharing and my full affection are at home. In fact last year I increased the periods I spent with my Jesuit community at the College, where I continue teaching, reducing the time I spent outside. Another reason for this

was the strain I felt when staying long continuous periods outside, chiefly during the monsoon. I dislike getting wet on my cycle, and I am sensitive to the heat against which some of those houses have little defences. In this way I am keeping my contact with families, and my roots at home. Gujaratis outside Gujarat have also called me for this house-to-house living, together with talks and 'satsang'. So far I have thus been to Madras, Madurai, East Africa and London. I use my holidays for such ministries.

My writings reflect my moods, and I was gladly surprised, indeed delighted, to see how an alert literary critic detected on his own the greater joy and intimacy that for some time now has happily crept into my articles and books. He wrote an open letter to me in a literary magazine on the occasion of the publication of my autobiography last year, and ended with the following words: "I have been carefully following all your publications ever since you started writing in Gujarati quite some years ago, and of late I am detecting in your writings a new freshness, a new spontaneity and a new glow-in-the-face that give a deeply pleasant joy to the reader." He has now invited me to address the College of which he is principal, and I have accepted. In a few days I'll be going there, and I am keeping a little surprise for him. I have not mentioned to him what the subject of my talk will be. I plan to begin by quoting those words of his about me, and then I will say: "Now I am going to explain to you why it is that such new freshness and spontaneity and glow-in-the-face have come into my life." And then the ideas and experiences I have set down in this article, and similar ones, will follow in their own way. Literary critics (as also editors of journals of theological reflection !) can be quite helpful in getting speakers to speak and writers to write. Which is how this article came to be written.

Bible Parichay. By Clement D. ROCKEY. Bareilly, *Hindi Theological Literature Committee*, 1979. Pp. xxviii-273. Rs 10.

Bible Parichay is an introduction to the OT books with simple commentaries, which proceeds from the author's vast knowledge and dedicated study of the Word of God. It has been translated, adapted and edited by Rev. Christopher B. Peter, professor at North India Theological College, Bareilly. The book is written to suit the interests and aptitudes of lay-readers. It introduces them to the

Bible as God's saving action unfolded in Jesus Christ.

The exegetical notes, simple and to the point, will be very helpful for a correct understanding and intelligent reading of the OT books. The book also contains a concise treatment of their religious and historical background. It exposes briefly the aims and objectives of the writers, the moral and religious teachings of the various books. It will help lovers of the Scriptures in their understanding of the Bible as the book of God's saving action, wherein he reveals himself gradually, preparing his people for his definitive revelation in the Son. B. TIRKEY, S.J.

Document

HANDING ON THE FIRE

Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* of Pope John Paul II

(October 16, 1979)

"You will hand on...the fire with which you are aflame to those united with you in the pastoral office. In this way the Synod will have the beneficial function of stimulating a renewed commitment for catechesis..."¹ Thus did Pope Paul VI on October 28, 1977, send back home two hundred bishops, joyful and hopeful over their very intense one month's labours in the Fourth General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops at Rome, which focused on the theme Paul himself had chosen, "Catechesis in Our Time, with Special Reference to Children and Young People".

For his part Pope Paul said he was happy to accept the Assembly's invitation to make known, in his own time, those points which he himself judged most opportune for the Church Universal. Two years and two popes later — in God's own time — the Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* (CT) has been published and communicated to the local Churches.²

The first thing one notices about it is how in many lines it resembles *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, the Apostolic Exhortation of Paul VI, composed after the Third General Assembly of the Synod in 1974 on the theme of Evangelisation.³ The two exhortations are indeed companion volumes, which together form the most authoritative and encouraging document on the renewal and priority of the ministry of proclamation.⁴

Pastoral, Practical, Vigorous and Clear

"The style is the man", so the saying goes. It is seen clearly in the pronouncements of all three of our most recent popes. Whether in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, in his encyclicals or his life-style, Paul VI's manner was uniquely pauline: concerned with Church unity, vigilant for fidelity, lovingly careful over the smallest details. The thirty-three short but symbolic days of John Paul I's ministry established him by the manner of his deeds and words as "parish priest of the world". And in the first pronouncements of John Paul II his mode of expression is all his own. Joannine-and-Pauline, pre-eminently pastoral, hard-

1. *Osservatore Romano*, English edition, November 10, 1977, p. 1.

2. This article uses the English translation of the Vatican Polyglot Press edition.

3. See VIDYAJYOTI 1976, pp. 216-230.

4. It is taken for granted that the documents of Vatican II are the basis for the two apostolic exhortations. Background to the present one is also the *General Catechetical Directory* (1971).

headedly practical, familiar, clear, even at times unashamedly old-fashioned. Everywhere there is a fresh vigour. In delicate matters, too, there is vigour, circumspect and informed, yes, but also strong and surprisingly unvarnished. In the present exhortation all of these traits shine forth, plus perhaps John Paul II's most characteristic charism, an extraordinary ability and readiness to celebrate the importance and identity of each person — none excepted — as a relative of Jesus Christ and as a beloved child of the Father. (This includes the social "nobodies": infants, children, the mentally retarded.)

The present article intends to give the gist of each chapter with a comment. This comment has a couple of purposes: to give the background of the papal teaching in the light of the 1977 Synod of Bishops and of present Church realities; to indicate some pastoral implications for India; and, above all, to invite the reader to study the document himself. Without doubt both this writer's selection of the gist-passages and, more, his comments reflect his own filtered — and, therefore, biased — experience. Hence the need for personal study.

Introduction (paras 1-4)

John Paul opens his Exhortation by locating catechesis historically within the apostolic community, recalling how Christ the Lord commanded the apostles to go out and make disciples of all nations, teaching them and explaining to them with authority all that he had taught, by his words and deeds, all they had seen and heard from him — their own personal experience of the Word who is Life. To enable them to fulfil this mission in power Jesus gave his apostles the Holy Spirit.

The Pope states that the name itself "catechesis" comes very early in the Christian era to describe the Church's work of forming disciples: to help people to believe, to educate and instruct them in their faith-life, to build up the Body of Christ. John Paul pays strong tribute to the late Paul VI for the eminent place he gave to catechesis throughout his pontificate. Among the initiatives singled out are Paul's authoritative interpretations of Vatican II, the documents of which Paul considered "the great catechism of modern times". In 1971 the Pope approved publication of the *General Catechetical Directory*, which John Paul II here calls "still the basic document for encouraging and guiding catechetical renewal throughout the Church". After successfully gathering together the contributions of 1974's Synod in the form of *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI designated the next Synod's theme as Catechesis with special attention to the young. The Synod of 1977, of which John Paul II — then a Cardinal — was a member, worked in a climate of exceptional hope and gratitude.⁵ In this same spirit the Pope addresses his Exhortation to the Church that it may strengthen the faith, invigorate catechesis with a spirit of discerning creativity, and make Christian communities

5. John Paul acknowledges the rich documentation he inherited from Synod 1977. This data came from verbal and written interventions, from the eleven linguistic study circles, from the six series of Propositions and from the "Message to the People of God" issued on October 28, 1977, the Synod's final day.

happy to share the mystery of Christ with all men. The Pope's appreciation of John Paul I as a catechist is also mentioned: his gift was to make catechesis both popular and yet solid, simple and yet touching the heart by concentrating on essentials.⁶

Comment

Three important remarks are prompted by CT's introduction. First, Synod '77 and CT help us rediscover the real meaning and priority of catechesis in the Church today by returning to Scripture and the apostolic community's spirit-filled experience. Referring to Mt 28:19-20 and 1 Jn 1:1, John Paul II gives us the key words and key realities for catechetical renewal: *Making Disciples, Teaching with Authority, Teaching All that Christ Commanded, Proclaiming to Humanity What They Personally Had Seen and Touched Concerning the Word of Life, Giving them the Spirit to Fulfil this Mission*. These key themes are repeated throughout the Exhortation.

Secondly, the Synod of 1977 recognises in catechetical renewal "a precious gift from the Holy Spirit to the Church of today, a gift to which the Christian communities at all levels throughout the world are responding with a generosity and inventive dedication that win admiration"(3). Some may feel strongly that this official recognition, which the Synod and now the Pope give to the Catechetical Movement, is late in coming. For this Movement parallels the Biblical, Liturgical and Ecumenical Movements which by more than fifty years antedated the Council and helped to prepare for it in a special way. Vatican II recognised officially these last three as movements of the Spirit by dedicating to them the Constitutions on Divine Revelation and Liturgy and the Decree on Ecumenism. Although Catechetics was mentioned — in passing, as it were — by almost all of the 16 documents of the Council, there was no complete treatment of it anywhere. On this point one may wish to argue with the Council — and/or with the Holy Spirit, as well — but, the fact is, Church renewal began with the publication of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of December 4, 1963. Thus, it was not an Ecumenical Council but the two General Synods of Bishops of 1974 and 1977 which finally took up renewal of the ministry of proclamation.

Thirdly, in addressing himself to the whole Church John Paul must necessarily limit his exhortation on this extremely vast theme "to a few only of the most topical and decisive aspects".

Chapter I: We Have but One Teacher, Jesus Christ (paras 5-9)

"The Fourth General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops often stressed the Christocentricity of all authentic catechesis." John Paul begins this first chapter with these words and then explains that at

6. Cardinal Luciani, later John Paul I, submitted a lengthy written intervention at the Synod of 1977. The content reflects all the characteristics for which his successor praises him as a most genial and talented catechist. See *Osservatore Romano*, October 12, 1978, p. 3.

the heart of all catechesis is the Person of Jesus Christ in all his mystery. The definitive aim, then, of catechesis is not just "getting in touch with" Christ, but catechesis means putting people in deep, permanent communion with him. The first conclusion of this basic principle is that the catechist must study assiduously the Word of God, as transmitted by the Church's teaching authority. Again, the catechist himself must be in profound communion with Christ through a spirit of prayer and familiarity. And the catechist must articulate only Christ's teaching, not his own or some other master's teaching. "Every catechist should be able to apply to himself the mysterious words of Jesus: 'My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me' (Jn 7: 16)."

The majesty of Christ, the Teacher, is found and communicated not by the words alone, still less in a body of abstract truths about him. Christ's words are never separated from his life and his being. He teaches by silences, miracles, gestures, prayer, by affection and love, above all by accepting the Cross. "Hence, for Christians the crucifix is one of the most sublime and popular images of Christ the Teacher." Catechesis communicates this whole mystery of Christ, to know the love of Christ with all the fullness of God (Eph 3: 9, 18-19).

Comment

Both the Synod interventions and John Paul throughout this exhortation return again and again to *criteria of authentic catechesis*. The prime criterium, of course, goes to *fidelity to Christ and all his teaching*. The catechetical world, like the theological world, after the Council is in some places not a little confused. For example, at Puebla, John Paul mentioned the phenomenon of unauthentic "re-readings of the Gospel". "Some people", he told the South American bishops, "have the temerity to pass them on, under the guise of catechesis, to the Christian communities."⁷ A few months later in his first encyclical, the Pope returned to this same subject of distorting Christ as he was dealing with contemporary theology and its important role in the Church. Nobody, John Paul wrote, can make of theology a simple collection of his own personal ideas, but "everybody must be aware of being in close union with the mission of teaching the truth for which the Church is responsible".⁸

In this first chapter of CT and often in the rest of the document John Paul's strong biblical sense of *Dabar-Yahweh*, the Word of God as Deed-Word, living with us, is very striking. The Paschal Mystery is expressed in words that are simple, alive and forceful, never in stereotyped or bookish phrases. The Pope is at home, also, in the language of images, which are the media increasingly for the "global village" of audio-visual culture. John Paul shows he not only understands this mode of communication but that he relishes to use it.

7. JOHN PAUL II, Opening Address at Puebla, January 28, 1979, I, 4. See VIDYAJYOTI 1979, p. 176.

8. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptor Hominis*, n. 19. See VIDYAJYOTI 1979, p. 332.

Chapter II: An Experience as Old as the Church (paras 10-17)

This chapter has two parts: (1) a brief historical survey, tracing out the centrality of catechesis from the very beginning of the Church throughout its two thousand years' lifespan; and (2) from this history, the Pope draws out four lessons, or conclusions, to renew faith-communities today through a continually renewed catechesis that is balanced.

Historical Survey

As in the opening passage of the Exhortation, John Paul once more mentions Christ's mandate to his apostles to make disciples of all nations. After his resurrection Christ the Lord sent out these specially chosen friends on a teaching-witnessing mission. Through his Holy Spirit he had impressed upon them his image as *the Teacher*. It was the experience of *this Jesus* which became the heart of their permanent ministry: to teach and to preach unceasingly by the wisdom and power of the Spirit. Of the apostolic age's fidelity to this divine mission there is abundant evidence throughout the *Acts of the Apostles*, in the epistles of Peter, John, Jude, James and, most especially, in the letters of St Paul. The written Gospels, too, reflect the oral catechesis given to the young churches, Matthew's account being called "the catechist's gospel" and Mark's "the catechumen's gospel".

Passing from the Apostolic to the Patristic Era, the Holy Father finds more evidence from the witness of the Fathers that the community of Jesus' disciples spent its time catechising, thus earning for the Church the title of "Mother and Teacher". The great ecclesiastical personalities of the third and fourth centuries in the East and West were, typically, all great catechists: Chrysostom and Clement, Ambrose and Augustine, Origen and Cyril of Jerusalem.

At the time of the Reformation the Council of Trent gave catechesis priority in its deliberations and decrees. This Council inspired an excellent work on catechesis called the Roman Catechism. Trent also animated Saints like Charles Borromeo, Robert Bellarmine and Peter Canisius to write their popular catechisms that were models for the time. In the following centuries, during the period of missionary expansion, education of the faith took on many vital forms, adapted to different circumstances and cultures. In short, whether one examines the Church's life within herself, discerning to know and live the Will of the Father, or looks at her missionary endeavours for the nations, all depends essentially on catechesis.

Four Lessons of History

(1) As individuals and as communities of Christ's disciples the Church has an inalienable right and a sacred duty both to receive religious education and to impart it in favourable times and places, without force, pressure or coercion from any social group or organisation. Although these God-given rights and duties are implicit in baptism, they are violated today by many States. The Pope vigorously protests against all such discrimination and constraints to human freedoms, especially to religious freedom.

(2) Two thousand years of history teach us that the more the Church, local and universal, gives catechesis priority over other works, the more she is strengthened both in her own community life of Christ's disciples and in her missionary outreach.

As the twentieth century draws to a close, the Church is bidden by God and by events — each of them a call from him — to renew her trust in catechetical activity as a prime aspect of her mission. She is bidden to offer catechesis her best resources in people and energy, without sparing effort, toil or material means, in order to organise it better and to train qualified personnel. This is no mere human calculation; it is an attitude of faith. And an attitude of faith always has reference to the faithfulness of God, who never fails to respond (15).

(3) The imparting of catechesis — that is, on-going faith-formation and continuing education of consciences — is the responsibility of every individual within the Church. With each class of person — bishop, priest, religious, laity, parent, teacher, media personnel — this responsibility is different in kind and degree, but still it is a definite and precise one. A hoped-for fruit of the 1977 Synod of Bishops is a new awareness within every Catholic that catechesis is everybody's business, in a way that is for each person special, in harmony with each one's place in the Community.

(4) Finally, catechesis must be renewed continually: (a) by broadening its meaning, (b) revising its methods, and (c) by discovering more effective language and media for its message. This renewal needs to be truly wise, according to the Gospel's wisdom, in order to avoid two extremes, both discernible today. On the one hand there are catechetical efforts that are slothful and lethargic; on the other there are hasty, superficial make-shift initiatives that cause within the community confusion and division. In her catechetical renewal the Church needs to be again as she has been in the past faithful, courageous and balanced.

Comment

"The image of Christ the Teacher...". The Holy Father here puts strong emphasis on this. Why? He certainly does not use the phrase as might a public relations' expert, who promotes "a good image" for his man. In the same vein, he clearly is not pushing some psychological approach to explain what made the apostles good catechists (as managerial institutes analyse executive charisms for sales' promotion). John Paul speaks of this "lasting image", this image that was "stamped on the spirit" of the Twelve. I believe that the Pope is here calling our attention to what is the most distinctive and decisive — if not the most important — grace for every authentic disciple-apostle. It is the grace of conscious fellowship with the Risen Lord. This comes about at the time of the believer's conversion-baptism-in-the-Spirit, when the Holy Spirit of Christ *infuses into* (or, pours over) the Christian an awareness that Jesus his Lord is alive, and present here within him now. This is the grace of Pentecost. It is essential for an authentic catechist — and an authentic Christian.

Godless Regimes Suppressing Religious Freedom

When CT refers to violations to religious freedom, this echoes the Synod's interventions on behalf of many believers behind the world's iron and bamboo curtains. And we in India recall that in Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Arunachal Pradesh there are oppressive laws curtailing these same fundamental rights. At least twice during the Synod Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, Archbishop of Krakow, spoke on behalf of the Polish episcopate about the courage of Christians who take part in catechetical sessions amidst such an "anti-catechetical" atmosphere on the part of the government. In time of such persecution the Church is *actualised* every time there is a coming together of even two or three disciples gathering in Christ's name.⁹

A New Awareness by Every Catholic as Co-responsible for Catechesis

In voicing the Synod's big desire that every Catholic feel and actually be involved somehow in the ministry of catechesis, John Paul II picks up a theme from Paul VI's closing address to the Synod:

In successive concentric waves, this impulse [for a renewed catechesis] will be propagated from the Synod to the episcopal assemblies of both East and West, and from these to parishes, families, schools and communities that meet in Christ's name, under the guidance of the legitimate Pastors. Thus Bishops living in different parts of the world, united with the Vicar of Christ, will initiate, direct and sustain this on-going renewal.... Indeed, this is the meaning and impact of your Message to the People of God, issued today from the city of Rome to the entire Church as this meeting of the Synod of Bishops comes to an end.¹⁰

These words express an intimate vision of Pope Paul VI. It is a vision both of the nature of the Church and of the importance of that collegial institution within the Church, the Synod of Bishops, which Paul himself initiated and encouraged into existence.¹¹ It is significant that the "concentric wave" image was prominent already in Paul's mind, as expressed in his first encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam*, a document that casts a prophetic light upon the whole of his pontificate.

Chapter III: Catechesis in the Church's Pastoral and Missionary Activity (paras 18-25)

Having surveyed the history of catechesis, John Paul now turns to the ministry of catechesis within the context of today's pastoral ministry. He does this by studying some essential points of the specific nature and special aims of catechesis in relation to other elements of the ministry of the Word. There is no question of refined and formal definitions; for this, the Pope refers his readers to the General Catechetical Directory (paras 17-35).

9. *Osservatore Romano*, October 13, 1977, p. 10 and November 3, 1977, p. 10.

10. *Osservatore Romano*, November 10, 1977, p. 1.

11. See the "Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops" of Vatican II (n. 5) which describes the Synod of Bishops. Cf. also in *Osservatore Romano*, October 6, 1977, p. 2, the discourse of Paul VI at the opening session of the Fourth General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (September 30, 1977).

John Paul acknowledges some uncertainties within catechetical practice. For this reason it is necessary to recall the essential landmarks of authentic catechesis—as solidly established in Church documents. Without this grasp of the specific nature of catechesis one misses its meaning and downplays its importance. This leads to further confusion by the setting up of false oppositions, as between orthopraxis and orthodoxy, a life-situation approach and doctrinal methodology. Authentic catechesis cannot be separated from other essential elements of that rich, complex and dynamic reality which the Church calls “evangelisation”. According to the usage of Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* evangelisation, in its broad sense, aims at bringing the Good News to the whole of humanity, so that all may live by it. Catechesis is one “moment” or element of this process. It is the *education in faith* of all Christians—children, youth, adults—which includes *instruction* in doctrine, imparted in a systematic, organic way, initiation into the sacramental mysteries and *on-going formation* into the fulness of Christian life.

To underline the specific function of catechesis the Pope mentions the “model form”, which is discerned in the adult catechumenate and within which the different elements of faith-growth are clearly seen. In this ideal or typical form there is (1) *the initial proclamation* of the kerygma. This is also called evangelisation in its most technical and restricted sense; it is also called missionary preaching. It inspires within a non-Christian his first conversion and surrender to the Lord. John Paul II describes this event in this way:

... a person is one day overwhelmed and brought to the decision to entrust himself to Jesus Christ by faith (25).

This initial faith must be “gradually deepened, developed in its implicit consequences, explained in language that includes an appeal to reason and channelled towards Christian practice in the Church and the world” (*ibid.*). This is done through catechesis, which within the catechumenate structure has several distinct dimensions. There is (2) *catechumenal catechesis*, which includes apologetics, or the examination of reasons for belief, and a further testing by an initial experience of Christian living. Then there comes (3) *sacramental catechesis*, with preparation for and initiation into the sacraments of the new life in God: baptism, confirmation and the eucharist. Finally, there is (4) *pastoral catechesis* that is given upon integration into the ecclesial community, which is apostolic and missionary (18).

The Holy Father states that catechetical practice must allow for the fact that very often children come to catechesis as baptised persons who are not yet committed to Jesus Christ, because they have never been given the proper formation in their families. Likewise there are many pre-adolescents, adolescents and adults who have received the sacraments and systematic catechesis but still have serious doubts and hesitations about entrusting their lives to the Lord. This reality is due to a number of factors, like a materialistic education or anti-Christian surroundings. Catechesis, therefore, must unceasingly seek to convert, that is, evangelise, in the strict sense. So, we see that evangelisation (in the technical sense, of bringing to conversion a non-Christian,

and in a broader sense, bringing to conversion an already baptised person) flows into catechesis and catechesis must, in practice, always call to conversion.

Catechesis, then, *develops* the understanding of the mystery of Christ in the light of God's word, so that the whole of a person's humanity is impregnated by that word. Day by day catechesis *nourishes* the Christian life towards the fulness of holiness and witness within the Church, and through the Church within the world. The traits of authentic catechesis stand out, as: (a) *systematic* and *programmed*—as distinguished from haphazard, and aimless presentations; (b) *dealing with essentials of the faith*—rather than fine points of theology or very scientific and esoteric scholarship; (c) *complete and integral*—going beyond the basic proclamation content, being open to other essential dimensions of ecclesial life. When liturgy is separated from catechesis then a "hollow ritualism" results, when catechesis is separated from community life there comes a barren individualism. The ecclesial community has a double duty here, to provide for catechetical training and to welcome those thus trained into "an environment where they can live as fully as possible what they have learned".

Comment

The broadened concept of catechesis given in chapter III is made possible only by the Vatican Council's (re)discovery of the vocation of every baptised person to the fulness of holiness and to participation in the mission of Christ and of the Church.

Vatican II called for the renewal—with due adaptation—of the adult catechumenate.¹² It was with the decline of this institution after the sixth century that catechesis began to be separated from evangelization, from the Bible, sacraments and community life itself. It is not surprising, then, that often in the course of Synod 1977 there were requests for more emphasis on the neo-catechumenate, on basic Christian communities, family catechesis and charismatic groups, those faith-communities, in other words, that approximate today what the catechumenates were in the early centuries. The Holy Father's insistence upon solid, regular, and systematic doctrinal teaching and study simply echoes the interventions and propositions of the Synod, the Message to the People of God and to Paul VI's closing remarks. Today around the world those small faith-communities flourish which insist on such solid nourishment and those which neglect it in favour of "happenings" soon die out, or go astray.

The insistence upon catechesis dealing with the *essentials of the faith* calls for careful training that is on-going for the catechists. It also demands a kind of professional ethics among servants of the Word, that they are duty bound on teaching and witnessing to the faith of the Church and to the teaching of Jesus Christ, rather than sharing their own problems, prejudices and hangups!

12. "Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops", n. 14.

**Chapter IV: The Whole of the Good News Drawn from its Sources
(paras 26-34)**

Having discussed the meaning and the aim of catechesis Pope John Paul here underlines heavily the importance of content. This content is nothing less than the whole message of Christ as entrusted to his Church. Whether it is doctrine, liturgy or principles for Christian living, the single source is the same: the *Word of God* as communicated to us in Tradition and Scriptures. In the life of the Church for two thousand years various Creeds have emerged, both those given by the Magisterium and popular expressions, too; these summaries are precious for the content of catechesis.

The Pope, relying on the teaching of *The General Catechetical Directory* and Pope Paul's *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, next calls attention to certain factors of content that must not be overlooked under any circumstances. If catechesis presents the whole message of Christ, the essential content, in a systematic, organic way, then the mysteries of God, of Christ, the Word become man, his Paschal Mystery, the Church, and the redemption of man, all of these find central place. Nor may the moral demands of the gospel be overlooked, man's duty to struggle for his own integral liberation, for fraternity, justice and peace. The social dimensions of Christ's Kingdom are not new; even in the Patristic age this emphasis was clear. The social encyclicals of the Popes must also find place in today's catechesis; this was insisted upon by the Synod of 1977.

On the whole question of catechetical content the Pope emphasises three points: integrity of content, pedagogical methods, and ecumenical dimension. As for integrity, Christ Our Lord's command is a pointer in the direction of entirety: "All authority... has been given to me... Make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe *all*... I am with you always." No true catechist, then, lawfully can select what he privately considers essential from the deposit of faith and teach only that, rejecting what he thinks unessential. Not only does Jesus the Lord forbid this but the person catechised has a divine right to receive "the word of faith not in mutilated, falsified or diminished form, but whole and entire, in all its rigour and vigour... This is why, when a person first becomes aware of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus... there is no valid pretext for refusing him any part whatever of that knowledge" (30).

When considering methods, pedagogy and language to be used, the guiding norm is this: the **WHOLE** message must be communicated. It will be communicated, moreover, in an orderly, balanced, organised way, observing a certain hierarchy of importance. For his part, the catechist is concerned to be an absolutely faithful messenger of Christ.

Turning to how catechesis must have an ecumenical expression, John Paul points out five characteristics. (1) Negatively, a truly ecumenical catechesis will never fail for whatever reason to teach the whole truth about the Catholic Church. (2) Positively, it will teach this truth in words and deeds, sincerely, showing respect towards those other ecclesial communities not yet in full union with the Catholic

Church. (3) Extremely important it is to show that the Holy Spirit of Jesus does not fail to use these other Churches to bring their people into union with God. (4) Catechesis that is ecumenical will give birth to and nurture a desire for full union, not by devious means such as doctrinal infidelity but by conversion of heart, by humility and obedience to the Spirit. (5) In short, catechesis will be ecumenical if it teaches Catholics, particularly the young, to respect others' faith, while helping them to bear witness to and grow in their own distinctively Christian identity.

As far as ecumenical catechetical collaboration goes between the Catholic Church and other Churches, the Holy Father states that in some countries this may be indicated. It is left to the bishops to decide the mode of collaboration, which of its nature is limited. This also calls for caution that integrity and fairness of presentation is observed. Any common catechetical texts which may be produced by such collaboration should supplement and never supplant the normal catechesis given to Catholics. In places where religious texts are imposed by civic authority, the Pope observes that, leaving aside distortions from prejudiced ideologies, such programmes can help all concerned for common understanding and appreciation of what other religions, other Churches, and the Catholic Church believe. However, these texts imposed by State authorities cannot be considered catechetical, because they lack the witness of believers sharing their faith and they lack understanding of Christian mysteries.

Comment

Vatican II has made it perfectly clear, to those who want to hear, that the age of religious polemics is over. The ecumenical dimension of Catholic teaching in catechesis, and in Catholic life inspired by such a catechesis, is of particular importance to India—e.g. in Kerala and in the tribal areas, particularly the northeast region, where evangelisation and ecumenical tensions are live issues. As mentioned already, CT is, first of all, a call to action. Taking these ecumenical guidelines seriously, then, will imply much more dialogue between Catholic and non-Catholic catechetical experts. The strong words Pope John Paul uses in this section support observations he made in the first days of his papal ministry that Church unity is a major concern which he intends to pursue by way of personal and doctrinal encouragement. John Paul's witness during his first year's service already confirms this.

Chapter V: Everybody Needs to Be Catechised (paras 35-45)

This chapter describes the faith-needs of Christians of all different ages and stages of growth, concluding with a summary statement that stresses the need for everyone to receive catechesis throughout their whole lives with a definite continuity:

It must be restated that nobody in the Church of Jesus Christ should feel excused from receiving catechesis. This is true even of young seminarians and young religious, and of all those called to the task of being pastors and

catechists. They will fulfil this task all the better if they are humble pupils of the Church, the great giver as well as the great receiver of catechesis (45).

The Pope recalls that the Synod's theme was: "Catechesis in our Time, with Special Reference to *Children and Young People*". He explains why Paul VI stressed faith-education of the young. First, their increased population—in the third world countries youth under 25 years of age forms the majority group of citizens. Then, youth is in fact the great force building tomorrow's civilisation. A third reality, however, gives rise to anxieties: youth is the target of seductive forces of various kinds. It is tempted by violence and dominated by uncertainty and fear. To care for these young people pastorally John Paul raises a self-examination question:

How are we to reveal Jesus Christ, God made man, to this multitude of children and young people, reveal him not just in the fascination of a first fleeting encounter but through an acquaintance, growing deeper and clearer daily, with him, his message, the plan of God that he has revealed, the call he addresses to each person, and the Kingdom that he wishes to establish in this world with the 'little flock' of those who believe in him, a Kingdom that will be complete only in eternity? How are we to enable them to know the meaning, the import, the fundamental requirements, the law of love, the promises and the hopes of this Kingdom? (35)

With this as the pastoral goal for catechesis to the young, the Holy Father then takes up the various "moments" of growth: infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood and maturity. He gives a thumbnail sketch of the characteristic faith-needs of each period and also of the kind of catechesis called for. *Infants* need from their parents an early initiation in praying, to listen to God's Word and to enter into a loving dialogue with the hidden God within them. *Children* must be given an initial but solid catechesis, which is elementary yet covering *all* the principal mysteries of the faith. It is a catechesis geared both to preparing for the celebration of the sacraments of reconciliation and eucharist; and it strengthens the child with the joy of bearing witness to Jesus the Lord in everyday life. *Adolescents* must be given a catechesis that enters right into their own life-questions. This faith-education will help them re-examine and reflect upon their actual situations and searchings in the light of Jesus, the friend, guide, model, and answer to their problems, who invites them to walk with him in the Paschal Exodus, through their first sufferings and the sufferings of the whole world, which they themselves are just beginning to become aware of. *Young Adults* characteristically can and must make fundamental options for being companions of Jesus Christ—whether as lay, or as religious and priests. Their catechesis must lighten the whole gamut of Christian living: the meaning of work, international peace, the meaning of development and total liberation. It must inspire proper attitudes for self-sacrifice, detachment, forbearance, commitment, justice, reconciliation and a sense of the Absolute and the unseen. Seen in this way, catechesis is for life; it is a permanent school of the faith, is more difficult and demanding than ever before. It is also more consoling, because of the generous response of youth. And the Church counts on these youth and their generosity (40).

The handicapped, physically and mentally, the youth without religious support, and the quasi-catechumens among adults are three special groups of Christians needing and having the right to receive a catechesis adapted to their needs. The quasi-catechumenate for adults is for those who have been baptised but have never received a truly Christian faith-education.

Comment

The richness of the Synod's experience and of the Holy Father's own pastoral experience come forth here in very short but detailed appreciation of the process of growth in faith and holiness. The CBCI's communication to this Synod fills in "between the lines" of Pope John Paul's remarks. The real depth of his condensed thought may escape the casual reader; but when applied to actual life-situations, point by point, the deep wisdom given here in summary form and generalisation provide catechists with excellent guidelines.

Chapter VI: Some Ways and Means of Catechesis (paras 46-50)

In this short chapter John Paul touches briefly and deftly four topics closely linked with the proclamation of catechesis—communication media, the eucharistic homily, occasions for religious gatherings and catechetical literature. Rather than deal with these subjects extensively, the Pope chooses to enforce attitudes and right orientations, keeping to the aim of his exhortation. After encouraging the Church's efforts to find more suitable means of communicating Christ's message, he ticks off various kinds of religious gatherings: pilgrimages, Bible-study groups, basic Christian communities, catholic action groups, prayer groups. In the name of Jesus, the Pope pleads with all concerned about such groups that *serious study of Christian doctrine* be always present. He sees the need to respect each kind of group for its nature and he adds that each kind will flourish *provided* it has the three dimensions of faith-education: *word* (doctrine), *memory* (celebration of the mystery) and *witness* (commitment by Christian living). Taking up the eucharistic homily as a continuation of catechesis, its deepening and fulfilment, John Paul calls for much attention in its preparation. Following the directives of the Vatican II constitution and subsequent documents on liturgical renewal, he sees it centred upon the Scripture texts themselves, adapted to the listeners, carried out by ordained ministers only, and its length, not too short and not too long.

Anything the Church does has a catechetical dimension; so the renewal of catechetical texts is all the more important today. This task is complex. It calls for the guidance of Bishops, the collaboration of experts and, in all, patience with resolution. While many valuable works have been produced, the Pope also notes that some other texts are ambiguous and positively harmful, particularly to the young. This happens when essential elements of the Faith are omitted. Sometimes the reason for this is that a theme of pedagogy becomes too important; more often it happens because of an horizontalist ideology

— in which God and the transcendent find no place systematically. To ensure a healthy renewal of catechetical texts there are definite conditions needing to be fulfilled. (1) The catechesis must be relevant to the lives of the participants, that is, dealing with their concerns. (2) It must be in a language that is understandable to them. (3) Essential elements of the faith must be clearly highlighted, without omitting anything of Christ's goodnews message given to us through his Church. (4) Conversion of life and conformity to the Father's Will are the aims of such catechesis. (5) It must be based upon the mysteries of Christ's life.

Comments

The CBCI Communication to the Synod drew attention to indigenous forms of media.¹³ India's media personnel have often asked themselves why it is that the Church is so slow to use these very effective means — puppet-shows, village melas with kirtans, bhajans, folk-dancing, and classical dance-dramas. Our country has 450 million illiterate brothers and sisters living mostly in villages, who are waiting to *see* and *hear* the good news. Literacy programmes surely are honourable and needed, especially functional and conscientising programmes that motivate to integral development and total evangelisation. But there are at hand effective media proven for centuries which are not adequately used. All efforts made at media education need to be strongly supported if the faith is to be communicated through an effective use of the media.

The Holy Father insists on solid doctrinal training for Catholic organisations. Are our YCS, AICUF, YCW, and adult education chaplains and animators on regional and national levels really encouraged to co-ordinate with other expressions of the ministry of the Word — liturgical, catechetical and theological — in common programmes of renewal? This is certainly one important practical application of what is meant.

We may smile to hear a Pope telling the world's priests that their homilies should be neither too long nor too short. Clearly he is not thinking just of quantity — a three minute piece of undiluted nonsense is too long. Major seminaries in India often have no trained personnel for homiletics and no regular, systematic course in its theory and practice (the same may be said of catechetics). Not infrequently in rural areas, where people walk miles for the Sunday eucharistic celebration the remark is heard after a mini-sermon that everything is over too soon. The Missal's instruction about keeping the people's needs in mind, first of all, is wise indeed.

If India can talk about its own catechetical texts, this must refer to the NBCLC's *God With Us Series*. The CBCI is engaged, through its Commission on Catechetics, in a scientific evaluation of these books. The Holy Father's directives — following closely the Synod's remarks

13. CBCI Centre, New Delhi, 1977. See nn. 81-87.

and those of *The General Catechetical Directory*—prompt a few reflections, especially since some regions are now engaged in the composition of their own inculturated and vernacularised catechetical books.¹⁴

A few of the most obvious learnings from the important NBCLC experiment seem to be these. (1) Catechetical texts on an all-India level have an almost impossible task because of the variety of life-situations in the country. If there is a meaningful attempt at inculturation—and there is this in the NBCLC books—one asks *which* culture? So many authorities, just as many opinions. (2) This first effort at a new expression of the faith came immediately after the Council, when many laity and churchmen were still digesting the basics of the Council itself, or even still uninformed about the Council. (3) The incarnational methodology often is understood only *superficially*. It is not appreciated for what it is, a deep spirituality, based upon both the biblical and theological teaching of Vatican II. So, a double task had to be accomplished through the NBCLC books: to express the Council in relevant terms to urban India's English speaking faithful, and to teach this through an *experiential* methodology which is in fact a communal discernment of God's will here and now. (4) Any catechetical effort is, first of all, a common effort, a family effort, calling for union among the hierarchy, who are primarily responsible for the People of God's faith-formation. Due appreciation of these realities can save much time, effort and anxiety among Catholics in India and can promote what John Paul terms "a more organic and more secure renewal" of catechesis (50).

Chapter VII: How to Impart Catechesis (paras 51-55)

The Pope recalls how the Synod of 1977 saw today's wide variety of methods in catechesis as a sign of life. To ensure that such pluralism remains healthy, John Paul calls attention to a number of dangers facing contemporary faith-educators. The first of these is the danger of adulterating catechesis with ideologies, whether these be manifest or secret, political or social, private or public.¹⁵ The

14. The tribal areas of North and North East India have officially begun their efforts with trained teams of experts under the guidance of the Bishops.

15. The Synod of 1977 often dealt with the danger of watering down the gospel and of outright distortion of the Church's mission from "ideologies". The Puebla General Assembly of Latin American Bishops has dealt with this at length. Both the positive and negative aspects of ideologies were seen and the constant danger of them "instrumentalising"—manipulating—the gospel. In its final document both liberal capitalism and Marxism are denounced, "the first because of its practical atheism, the second because of its systematic profession of militant atheism". Both are inspired by closed humanisms which ignore man's transcendental horizons. Concerning the use of Marxist analysis in theological reflection the document observes the following: "It must be pointed out that theological reflection runs the risk of ideologisation whenever it takes as point of departure the praxis resulting from Marxist analysis. Its consequences are the total politisation of Christian existence, the dissolution of the language of social sciences and the emptying of the transcendental dimension of the Christian salvation" (n. 406). "Some people believe that it would be possible to distinguish or separate the various elements of Marxism. They refer in particular to its method of analysis. We call to mind with the Pontifical Magisterium that 'it will be deceitful and dangerous to forget the intimate link with which they are radically united; to accept the elements of Marxist analysis without realising

essential Good News message then becomes distorted and subordinated to some form of this-world messianism, whereas Christian faith-education is based upon divine revelation given to us through a universal Magisterium. This revelation instructs us about the mystery of Jesus Christ which is beyond the reach of any ideology, because revelation is beyond human means, absolutely.

Another danger is a subordination of Christian teaching to cultural forms. "Genuine catechists know that catechesis 'takes flesh' in the various cultures and milieux. . . . But they refuse to accept an impoverishment of catechesis through a renunciation or obscuring of its message, by adaptations, even in language, that would endanger the 'precious deposit' of the faith or by concessions in matters of faith or morals" (53).

It would be a mistake and an impoverishment of catechesis to fail to retain the good elements in popular piety and prayers used by the people, while at the same time faith-educators must rectify elements needing purification. Realism, too, guides catechetical renewal which keeps memorisation of key formulas of the faith, ensuring that these are interiorised. In short, whatever be the methods used for effective faith-formation, a judicious balance must be kept and, above all, a fidelity both to God and to man lovingly and in truth.

Comment

Pointing out that elements of popular devotion, purified and rectified if need be, can contribute to a sound catechesis, the Pope asks, without answering it, a question which may seem puzzling, even disappointing: "Why should we appeal to non-Christian, or even anti-Christian elements, refusing to build on elements which, even if they need to be revised and improved, have something Christian at their root?" (54). This exclamation was made in the final *circuli minores* by the Latin speaking group, of which Cardinal Woytila of Krakow was a member. The context was that faith cannot be separated from life. The personal life of the catechist, his prayer life in particular, is central. The subjects referred to were Catholics in traditionally Christian countries, where "guru-fads" are blossoming out today, promoted by oriental sects, not a few of them on a commercial basis. The non-Christian elements in question are the *ersatz* of Eastern spirituality, not its authentic forms. Hodge-podge eclecticism is reprehended, not a genuine synthesis of Eastern and Western mysticism. In the context of the West, Harvey Cox, for one, answers the Pope's question as follows:

The Spiritual crisis of the West will not be resolved by spiritual importations or individual salvation. It is the crisis of a whole civilisation, and one of its major symptoms is the belief that the answer must come from Elsewhere. The crisis can be met only when the West sets aside myths of the Orient, and

its relationship with its ideology and to enter into the praxis of class struggle and its Marxist interpretation without foreseeing the type of totalitarian and violent society which such a process leads to" (n. 405). See *Teaching All Nations* 1979, p. 59.

returns to its own primal roots.... We can only begin to know the real Orient when we are willing to let go of the mythical one. And we can only begin to hear the message of the Oriental religious traditions when we are willing to confront the inner dislocations in our own civilisation that caused us to invent the myth of the East in the first place.¹⁶

I quote this passage because Cox does, as did India's delegates to Synod 1977, appreciate what is authentic, substantial and genuine in the great Eastern spiritualities. But he also sees, as does John Paul II, that a weak, sick, broken and poorly educated (in faith) Christian "seeker", when he turns from Christ and the Church to the East, the mythical Elsewhere, may very well be heading for disillusionment and greater disappointment. In all of this we should also ask why Catholics, especially the youth, turn to oriental non-Christian spiritualities. Here again Cox and other "catechists", who bother to listen to youth, get the answer. It is not pleasant to hear from them that youth is not helped by Catholic spiritual guides to come into vital contact with God. This makes for painful self-examination. Youth is hungry for experience of God. It wants it now and it is not always helped towards it by the ins'titutional guides.

Chapter VII: The Joy of Faith in a Troubled World (paras 56-61)

The title of this chapter states one of CT's main themes, which was earlier elaborated upon in John Paul's encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*: faith education continually moulds and refines Christian identity in a hostile, indifferent world, which needs God desperately.

The most valuable gift that the Church can offer to the bewildered and restless world of our time is to form within it Christians who are confirmed in what is essential and who are humbly joyful in their faith (61).

In order not only to "hold on" but to reach out to this world in a "dialogue of salvation", the Christian needs a sturdy, discerning faith. Some areas of faith-education which today need careful discernment are how the sciences of pedagogy, linguistics, philosophy and theology can be used, so as to serve and not to hinder the faith-nurturing of God's people.

Pedagogical methods and techniques are valuable to the extent only that they serve for better transmission of the faith. The uniqueness of faith must be appreciated in the whole process of communication. Linguistics, in its turn, must be recognised as of basic import to catechesis. Faith-educators who use this science are called upon to be creative, so that the whole content of the treasure given to them by God and the Church is communicated. This is the supreme rule. Likewise, philosophy helps believers to be searchers. But the search has a term just as the Magi's pilgrimage came to fulfilment in the presence and possession of the Christ Child. So, faith-formation brings pilgrims along the Way, guided by simple yet solid certainties. Theology's service to faith-formation is profound, vital and irreplace-

16. Harvey Cox, *Turning East, The Promise and the Peril of the New Orientalism*, Simon and Schuster, 1977. Cox has also authored a related study entitled *Seduction of the Spirit, Use and Abuse of Other People's Religion*.

able. The Holy Father insists that theologians appreciate their place in the Church, refusing to "trouble the minds of the children and young people, at this stage of their catechesis, with outlandish theories, useless questions and unproductive discussions, things that Saint Paul often condemned in his pastoral letters" (61). No less careful and wise must be the choice of theological reflections which catechists select from theological research to help faith education be more relevant and effective.

Comment

To appreciate John Paul's and the Synod's concern that all relevant sciences be integrated in a balanced, discerned way for a more effective faith-education, it will help to look at education in Europe and North America. Whereas in India the behavioural sciences have not yet been significantly synthesised into general education — still less religious education — in the West they have perhaps, in some places, gained too much prominence, in the sense that in their name too much is claimed and expected, and the people responsible overstep their competence, thus violating their own professed principles. This is called "scientism" and in the West it has infected faith-education (e.g. extreme forms of "process theology"). There is a very definite "lag" in India to incorporate elements from the sciences of man into theological reflection and faith-formation; now this should make catechists in our country all the more responsible to learn from the mistakes of other Churches. In India there is another "lag" proper to our own situation: the poor level of education of our laity and religious, theologically and catechetically. Call it lag or gap, it is one of the main reasons why our local Churches have so few lay leaders and is dangerously clericalist. The vernacularisation and contextualisation of seminary training will help greatly to remedy this. We can be thankful for good theologians and exegetes. The Church in India needs many more of them and needs to encourage them and dialogue with them. Theological publications are growing in number and so too are pastoral centres. The CBCI meeting in Ranchi, October 1979, clarified somewhat the proper forum for theological discussion, so as to help the theologians professionally and obviate misunderstanding by the laity. The Catholic Press has a role of self-discipline and selection here. Catechesis without good theologians and exegetes is like a jet plane in flight without compass and radio. The dialogue begun needs to be increased, especially with the pastors as listeners and guides.

Chapter IX: The Task Concerns Us All and Conclusion (paras 62-73)

To mark the opening of the second year of his papal ministry, John Paul addresses this exhortation to the whole Church on the joy of catechising with hope and enthusiasm. He has a word of heartfelt encouragement for each class of catechist: bishop, priest, deacon, religious, laity.

Bishops are the number-one-catechists. Under God they are responsible collegially with the Pope for faith-education in the whole

Church. Their concern for catechesis should "yield to no other care whatever in any way"(63). With trustworthy and competent helpers bishops must personally exercise this ministry, promoting and maintaining a "real passion for catechesis". If this is done as the Lord wishes, everything else in the diocese will be easier to do.

As assistants of the Bishop, *priests* are looked upon by the Second Vatican Council as "instructors in the faith". The whole Church rightfully expects from them a catechetical service that is lacking in nothing.

By reason of their consecration *religious* should be all the more available for catechesis, each Institute according to its charism, giving as much as possible of their resources.

Special thanks are due to *lay* catechists, especially to the women, so numerous in this field, and to catechists in "mission lands". The Pope expresses deep joy at efforts to improve the training and facilitate the ministry of these people, from among whom already there are canonised Saints.

Next, in succession, John Paul considers the various "places" of faith-education: the parish, home and school, organisations of Catholic services and institutes for catechetical training.

The Parish. Agreeing with many bishops of Synod 1977, the Holy Father calls the parish the "prime-mover and pre-eminent place for catechesis". True, there have been many profound changes affecting the parish — leading some people even to consider it as out-of-date and doomed to disappear. Realism, however, demands a renewed attention and restoration of its importance. Adapting to new needs and respectful of a healthy pluralism of structures, the parish must rediscover its vocation to build real faith-communities that nurture holiness in all its members and daily send them out as apostles. The parish is the rallying place for union of faith; and so, larger parishes have a serious obligation to provide trained, full-time catechists who are also given proper equipment for their work.

The Family. Called by God to be catechists for their own children, parents must offer not only occasional faith-education but catechesis in the strict sense, one that is methodical, which prepares, accompanies, repeats and deepens the catechesis their children receive elsewhere. This priceless service of parents not only helps the children but profits parents as well.

The School and Organisations. To be worthy of the name, "Catholic" schools and organisations have the grave duty to provide under the guidance of the hierarchy a religious formation that is real, direct, explicit. It is simply not enough to supply services of high quality in non-religious matters, while neglecting or deviating from the clear obligation to deepen the faith and religious experience of their charges by qualified catechists. Today culture must be harmonised with faith. This principle is a matter of such firm conviction to himself, says the Pope, that he considers respectful promotion of on-going faith-education among the young a most honourable mark of any government, no matter what ideology it follows.

Catechetical Training Institutes. From all this the need clearly follows of preparing more and more catechists by organising training programmes. Co-operation locally and internationally is called for.

The Holy Spirit of the Risen Lord is the *Teacher-within*, so concludes the Pope. He it is who inspires the whole work of catechesis; he who opens minds and hearts that the catechists and catechised may understand the divine mysteries and be transformed as disciples of Christ and apostles. Reflecting upon texts of Scripture, John Paul points out to all catechists that, when catechising within the Church and in her name, they ought to be very much aware that they are acting as living instruments of Christ's Holy Spirit, pliable to his direction. Constantly to invoke the Spirit and ever more deeply to know and obey his inspirations must be every catechist's attitude. As Paul VI remarked, the Church is living in an exceptionally favourable season of the Spirit. The authenticity of Church renewal in the Spirit and of the renewal of catechesis must be judged not so much by extraordinary charisms as by the daily witness of as many Christians as possible humbly, patiently, perseveringly learning and living the mystery of Christ Jesus better and better.

Comment

Chapter IX and the Conclusion clearly express the mind of the Pope and the Synod in a few words; God calls the whole Church today — with no exceptions — to be catechised and to catechise. These final pages, then, summarise the whole message. Encouraging words, they are; but words that call bishops, priests, religious and laity, to put pastoral priorities right *under serious obligation*. These words, binding in conscience, come again and again as John Paul closes his exhortation.

His insistence upon the rejuvenation of the parish echoes two synodal interventions he made as Cardinal Archbishop of Krakow.¹⁷ One may surmise that this insistence upon parishes being made again — with necessary adaptation — the centre of faith-life is the reason why more is not made of basic Christian communities and neo-catechumenal communities, both of which were often discussed in the Synod.¹⁸ The reports of the *circuli minores*, particularly of the Spanish and French groups, offer a very balanced view of a pluralistic approach to ecclesial communities flourishing within the renewed parish. In order to be truly ecclesial, these must measure up to certain norms — be open to other communities, be animated by the ordained ministry, celebrate the sacraments and live in charity. The Church in India will have no problem about this invitation, but it will have to "translate" the renewal differently in north and south. In the South more variety is

17. *Osservatore Romano*, October 13, 1977, p. 10 and November 3, 1977, p. 10.

18. See *Osservatore Romano*, November 3, 1977, pp. 12-16. Also, *Teaching All Nations*, 1978, n. 3, which entire issue is devoted to various kinds of new Christian communities. *Christ to the World*, 1977, n. 3, reports Paul VI's directives to neo-catechumenal communities.

called for, whereas in the newly formed Churches of the North the parish is still trying to create among its people the first experience of a eucharistic unity, whether in villages or at a centrally located place where the Church and priest are located. Two different—and equally vital—kinds of creativity are needed. Both of them can and should be according to the spirit described.

The final word, not with a surprise, John Paul gives to Mary, "the Virgin of Pentecost", "Mother and Model of Catechists", "Living Catechism". He sees the child Jesus on her lap; he sees her later as Christ's disciple par excellence. To her prayers John Paul commends the Church now, that through the power of the Spirit there may be an "unprecedented enthusiasm in the catechetical work that is essential" to the Church.

E. J. DALY, S.J.

Continued from p. 148

vividly against the background of 18th-century England, mostly western England. Endowed by his devout and enlightened parents, mostly his mother, with a personal and deep Christian training, John set to task to raise up the Christian awareness of his own Anglican people caught between waves of theism, agnosticism and secularism. His religious evolution was the strongest between 1729 and 1738, these years being preceded by an intense search in 1725-1729. Wesley looked almost throughout his life-time for the assurance of faith. It cannot be said that he obtained it as frequently as he expected.

At any rate, after his ordination and a spell of missionary work in Georgia (N. America), he got sufficiently strong and inspired to launch the *Revival*. He regarded it as the essential means to awaken his Christian folk to a deeper commitment to their calling. A short stay in Germany, especially with the "pietists" of Herrnhut, helped him in no small manner to organise his spiritual quest and his apostolate.

It all started at Bristol at the end of May 1739. It expanded far and wide. Wesley's courage and perseverance was really incredible. A man of principles, he wanted to combine discipline (hence the term 'Methodism') with gentleness. A genius for organisation, he succeeded in building up hundreds of 'Methodist Societies', which aimed at practising the evangelical ideal as closely as possible. It cannot be denied that often his followers

failed to come to his high expectations; yet we come across many cases where the spirit of the early Church was really at work, e.g. in helping out their poorer members.

Wesley was spiritually formed by the reading of the Puritan Divines (R. Baxter, John Bunyan, etc.), but to a remarkable degree also by such Fathers as Ephrem Syrus and Gregory of Nyssa, and by Catholic authors such as Francis de Sales, Scupoli, Teresa of Avila, B. Pascal, Fénelon and Mrs Guyon, without mentioning of course the Imitation of Christ. He was even accused of being a 'papist' (p. 314)!

Trials, both social and personal, were not wanting. Not only did he deeply suffer from an unhappy marriage, but above all from his increasingly tense relations with his own Church, that of England. It was chiefly from 1784 onwards, when the American Methodist Church became established after he himself had ordained its first two 'elders', that a point of no return was almost reached. Yet, his brother Charles, the prolific author of so many hymns, lived and died as an Anglican.

In many traits of his character, Wesley is very close to us, especially by his insistence on experience and spiritual reflection. The biographer has certainly succeeded in bringing out such similarities, and we must all be grateful to him.

E. R. HAMBYE, S.J.

Correspondence

Dear Editor

Something slipped. I usually enjoy my reading of *VIDYAYOTI*. I didn't this time. For some reason or other the printing of the December 1979 issue was poor. I can easily excuse the Catholic Press, Ranchi, as they almost always do a good job for us. Joe Currie's article was helpful and I thank you for giving us several of his contributions. But what was the use of Mervyn Carapiet's "Masturbation and Sacred Orders"? Carapiet is on the whole pessimistic in his approach, and surely without wishing it, tends to produce a certain fear in his readers. A counsellor hardly uses terms as "should", "must", "ought", or categorical imperatives which are prominent in this article.

Example: The very first sentence, "Masturbation could well be for the seminarian the symptom of an acute internal conflict that the normal seminary training is not sufficient to resolve" (p. 514), appears tilted. Other examples: "Such a seminarian is gravely insecure and his fundamental option for God... very dubious" (p. 515). "If such a habit persists into the major seminary the candidate *should* be advised not to continue in his studies" (p. 515). "Such a person is narcissistic: he loves himself too much for any self-analysis and is certainly not prepared for an correction by others" (p. 516). "Such a candidate is *completely* disoriented from the goal of the priesthood... and it is imperative that he be advised to give up all thought of the priesthood" (p. 517). "The seminarian's claim that he is an adult *should* be a consistent one, i.e. he *must* be an adult right through every dimension of his being: physical emotional, sexual, intellectual, spiritual and social" (p. 517 bottom). For heaven's sake, where on earth do we find such well balanced and perfect individuals outside of text-books and articles? "He *ought* to realise his responsibility of being consistently an adult even with regard to his sexual impulses" (p. 518). Even the sentence "The seminary programme is meant to shape up this imperfect material to ensure that only worthy priests pass out of its portals" (p. 518) seems to me very stretched and unnuanced. It will be long before we find *only* worthy priests passing out of their portals.

I do not understand the meaning of the words on page 519: "As the obverse of masturbation the seminarian is not being asked to aim at holiness of life but a normal life. He *should* understand that a normal adult does not deliberately masturbate even occasionally."

The problem of masturbation among seminarians and candidates to the priesthood is a real one and needs our attention. But it has to be treated with much greater pastoral care, sympathy, and sensitivity. When dealt with in this manner and with much time and devoted attention given to the individual seminarian, he often responds in a positive way and is helped towards handling a situation which he himself is very keen on resolving. We assume this in the first place. The counselling then proceeds in a constructive and growthful manner and we can then give to the Church and her people priests who are reasonably mature and who can free take up the responsibilities of celibate life and live it in a satisfying and happy way.

Yours sincerely,
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Anthony CORLHO, S.J.

Book Reviews

Sacred Scripture

Mary in the New Testament. A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars. Edited by Raymond E. BROWN, Karl P. DONFRIED, Joseph A. FITZMYER, and John REUMANN. Ramsey, Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. xii-323. \$ 3.95.

This study about Mary in the NT and in the literature of the second century is modelled upon a similar attempt concerning Peter in the NT (1973). Both works have been prepared by a team consisting to a large extent of the same members. Both studies are intended to discover the origin and the development of the tradition. "One of our tasks will be to trace the way in which historical facts have been moulded by Christians in their attempt to understand Mary's role in what God has wrought in Jesus Christ" (p. 8).

The team examines, in a roughly chronological sequence, those NT writings that make reference to Mary explicitly or implicitly or probably. Such are: "possible pre-pauline formulations" in Phil 2, 6-11; a reference to the Davidic descent and divine sonship of Jesus (Rom 1, 3f); passages with "possible Marian import" in Gal 1, 19; 4, 4; 4, 28f; but mostly passages in the four Gospels and Acts. There is also a reference to the woman in Rev 12. The authors rightly have refused to find a "high" Mariology in the NT by using the argument from silence, i.e. the argument that authors like Mark who do not speak explicitly of the virginal conception are silent about it "because they take it for granted". Yet, at the same time we are told that "we may note that neither Matthew nor Luke speaks of the pre-existent Son of God who became incarnate, and that John, the only evangelist who does, apparently knows nothing of a virginal conception" (p. 291, note 665). At that rate we might argue that John knows nothing about the institution of the Eucharist, or about the Beatitudes, many parables, etc.

In his study on *The Birth of the Messiah* (cf. VIDYARYOTI 1979, pp. 42-43) Brown argued already strongly for a

'retrojective' Christological development. A similar bias towards a retrojective Mariological development is found here. The authors argue that in the Gospels some images of Mary have been retrojected upon the ministry of Jesus, either in a positive or in a negative tone. Thus, v.g., "the negative portrait of Mary in Mark's Gospel does not necessarily show the 'true' Mary as opposed to the obedient and believing Mary of Luke. Mark's preoccupation with emphasizing the misunderstanding shown towards Jesus by his disciples during the time of the ministry could well have been extended to the portrayal of Mary" (p. 284). We are told repeatedly that Mary did not belong "to the new family of Jesus constituted by the proclamation of the Kingdom and characterized by discipleship and doing God's will" (p. 24).

The study contains many interesting analyses and suggestions next to certain conclusions which may appear too subjective or influenced by methodological presuppositions. Accepting the general priority of Mk over Mt and Lk, the authors view that "in the Synoptic depiction of Mary during Jesus' ministry we have a development from the negative estimation of Mark to the positive one of Luke, with Matthew representing the middle term" (p. 287). The team assumes that, while John sets the Cana story within the ministry of Jesus, "he built upon a story dealing with the pre-history period, in which Mary appeared as one who believed in Jesus... although for the evangelist this is clearly a misunderstanding of Jesus" (p. 287). Consequently Mary is classified in the category of those whose request for a sign "shows both naïve trust and a lack of comprehension, leading ultimately to solid faith". Mary "is not yet a model for believers and indeed is kept distinct from the disciples who at Cana saw his (Christ's) glory and believed in him" (p. 194). "The Cana story, both on the traditional and redactional level, places Mary in a less negative light than that in which she appears in the Gospel of Mark, but because of her imperfect faith at Cana she is not comparable to the believing and obedient Mary of Luke's Gospel" (p. 288).

Differences in the accounts are seen as an early instance of pluralism in Christian Mariology. The real difficulty, however, lies in the interpretation of the accounts. Here one may doubt whether the views on "New Testament Pluralism" as exposed in the section on "Theological Method in Evaluating New Testament Evidence" (pp. 22ff) are critically sufficiently balanced.

One may regret that the texts are interpreted too much individually, treated as a collection of views reflecting the 'pluralistic' theology of the early Church and neglecting the aspect of Scripture as a canon of revelation. The main question remains that of the relation between Scripture and Tradition, historical certitude and conviction of faith. This point appears especially when we consider Mary's virginal conception and her perpetual virginity. The team agrees that "the question of the historicity of the virginal conception could not be settled by historical-critical exegesis, and that one's attitude towards Church tradition on the matter would probably be the decisive force in determining one's view whether the virginal conception is a theologoumenon or a literal fact" (p. 292). Similarly the group agrees that "the fact that the NT speaks of the brothers and sisters of Jesus does not constitute an insuperable barrier to the view that Mary remained a virgin, but there is no convincing argument from the NT against the literal meaning of the words 'brother' and 'sister' when they are used of Jesus' relatives. Here again, as in the case of the virginal conception, Church tradition will be the determining factor in the view that one takes, with the important difference that while the virginal conception is based on NT evidence, the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity goes beyond anything said of her in the Scriptures" (p. 292).

The study is a scholarly work which, I fear, may not be fully appreciated by the general reader. Scholars on the other hand may regret that the bibliographical references are rather scanty. The study is strongly based upon the historico-critical method. The remark made by R. H. Fuller when reviewing Brown's study on the birth of the Messiah comes naturally to mind: "It is ironic that at a time when the limitations of the historical critical method are being discovered in Protestantism, Roman Catholic scholars should be bent on pursuing that method so relentlessly" (CBQ 1978, p. 120). One must add, however, that the authors are not unaware of the limitations of the method, but one

is inclined to think that they could at times have expressed their conclusions or hypotheses with more nuances.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

Destroy this Temple. By Lucius NEREPARAMPIL. *Bangalore, Dharmaram Publications, 1978. Pp. xii-124. Rs 12.*

The sub-title specifies the topic of the book, viz. "An Exegetico-Theological Study on the Meaning of Jesus' Temple-Logion in Jn 2:19". The book consists of an excerpt of a dissertation submitted to the Gregorian University for a doctorate in Theology. This explains the style of the book. In his thesis the author examines the following points: 1. the context of the Lord's saying in Jn 2, 19; 2. the significance of some Johannine words that appear in Jn 2, 13-22; 3. the structure of the passage; 4. the meaning and nature of Jesus' action of cleansing the Temple; 5. the meaning of Jn 2, 18-22. Only this last chapter is reproduced in this book.

The Introduction to the excerpt considers some critical points such as the authenticity of the Temple logion, its original form, identity, sources, etc. In ch. 1 the introductory v. 18 is examined. This is followed by a detailed analysis of the saying in v. 19 (ch. 2) and a brief survey of the interpretations of v. 20 (ch. 3). The final chapter offers a reflection on the Temple-logion and on the realization of its meaning by the disciples (vv. 21f).

The examination of the text, style and vocabulary proceeds methodically and at some length. I wonder, however, whether the view that the active of the verb 'egeirō' rather than the passive implies a reference to Jesus' power of raising himself up from the dead is not influenced by an unconscious presupposition that Jesus by referring to his resurrection was manifesting his divine Sonship. Further, the author is labouring regarding the 'sign' in the passage. One might question first whether, as a matter of fact, the Temple episode is concerned with a 'sign' at all. True, the Jews request a sign from Jesus to justify his action; yet, this fact does not necessarily imply that Jesus did give them a sign. Jesus, here as he does on other occasions as well, not only refuses to comply with their request; he rather reacts by asserting his authority. He does so by suggesting that he is the builder of the new or spiritual Temple which the Jewish tradition expected for the Messianic times. The hint would be sufficiently clear for the readers familiar

with the OT and Jewish Messianic expectations. We note, moreover, that Jesus' opponents do not insist any further. As elsewhere in Jn the hearers either refuse to understand or they misunderstand Jesus' words, while the disciples will understand the real meaning of his words after the resurrection. The reference to the resurrection is a comment by the evangelist; the choice of his vocabulary would naturally evoke a special meaning for the Christian reader.

It is regrettable that a book which reads well got such poor proof-reading. There are a couple of slips as v.g. the mention of an abbreviation JRSR explained as "Journal de recherches de science religieuse" (p. ix).

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

Paul, Envoy Extraordinary. By Malcom MUGGERIDGE and Alec VIDLER. *London, Collins (Fount Paperbacks), 1979. Pp. 173. 95p.*

This short book is based on a BBC Television Film reproducing the authors' two months travel following Paul "on his restless journeys from city to city, up and down the highways and the seaways of the great Roman Empire as it existed in his time." Their comments are presented in the form of a dialogue, Malcom, the journalist putting questions, Adler, the theologian explaining Paul's milieu, his person and his message. In five chapters we hear of Paul the convert, the Christian, the evangelist, the missionary, and the martyr. The conversation at times develops into an argument but is always enlightening.

M. Muggeridge writes the introduction in the form of a letter to his friend Alec who in turn writes the epilogue. Both accounts reflect the experience of a nearness to Paul producing in each one a quite different reaction according to each one's temperament and genius, but both are entirely at one in their sense of indebtedness to Paul.

The book will render service as a first contact with the Apostle, the man of Christ, and his message.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

A Lamp For My Steps. Aids to Biblical Prayers. By Sean B. KELLEHER. *Bangalore, Theological Publications in India, 1979. Pp. ii-244. Rs 13.*

Moved by the conviction that a merely academic approach to Scripture which does not lead to prayer is of doubtful value, the author presents a series of seventy-five meditations which, he pre-

sumes, will give a fairly comprehensive view of what it means to be a Christian. Each meditation is introduced by a Scripture passage, and is followed normally by a quotation from a Psalm or occasionally from another section of the OT, somewhat in the form of a 'responsory'. The exercise ends with a prayer borrowed from, or inspired by an old series of 'collects'. In this set up the volume will not only give ample material for private prayer, but could be used also for para-liturgical purposes. Priests will also find here ideas for their homilies. For this last purpose, however, an index of scriptural passages would have added to the usefulness of the work.

Themes are grouped, still it is not easy to find in the work a clear logical sequence. The reader should not look for a strict exegetical exposition of each Scripture passage, nor should he expect a too close connection between meditation and responsory or the concluding prayer. These elements are meant rather to serve as an inspiration or to give a background for prayer. The author's main purpose is to help the reader discover how God's inspired word is "a dynamic instrument" for a life of prayer. His efforts will undoubtedly bear fruit.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

Moral Theology

Doing the Truth. The Quest for Moral Theology. By Enda McDONAGH. *Dublin, Gill & Macmillan, 1979. Pp. 217. £ 7.50.*

The interest of this book is in a quest of moral theology as autobiography and sociobiography. It is a collection of occasional essays on familiar themes like prayer, Christian freedom, violence and marriage. The author presents them as a record of his own struggles, personal and social, intellectual and spiritual. Such an autobiographical note raises the important question of how far one's own experiences may be a valid way of theological exploration. Thus the work's introduction on theology as autobiography and its conclusion on theology as sociobiography may be considered as a contribution to theological methodology today. It is good to see a prominent moral theologian having an insight into influences which lead him to adopt a particular stance or viewpoint.

Most of the essays come up to the high standard one has come to expect from

the author. He combines depth of thought with clarity and force of expression. He seeks to bridge the gulf between worship and life and between morality and spirituality. He gives particular attention to social questions.

Regarding violence as an instrument of political change, he starts from 'reservations', thereby somewhat prejudicing the issue. This may be because he has the senseless violence in Northern Ireland in mind. If he were dealing with some other situations like in Latin America or Southern Africa, he would perhaps put some nuances in his position. He does not show sufficient grasp of the impossible situation in which some people are placed by most oppressive structures. Still, it must be recognised that violence cannot be used without the utmost caution lest the ensuing situation be worse than the one from which the people set themselves to be freed.

It is interesting to note that, examining his personal experiences, the author is led to recognize the wider social influences that affect one's reflection. So he examines the influence of the ecclesial, academic and civic context on one's theologising. Such an effort, the author feels, should help one to protect his theology from self-deception and self-interest.

The work will surely be of much interest if it is read from the particular focus from which it is written.

G. LOBO, S.J.

Eastern Christianity

Understanding Eastern Christianity. By George EVERY. Bangalore, Dharmaram Publications, 1978. Pp. xxiv-136. Rs 12.

George Every is a well-known English scholar, formerly Anglican, now Catholic. For years now he has been a most diligent student of the Eastern Churches, not only of the Byzantine tradition as witnessed by his much appreciated book on *The Byzantine Patriarchate*, but also of other Oriental traditions, such as the Syriac, Armenian and Coptic.

The lectures he delivered in 1977 in Rome to celebrate the golden jubilee of Father Placid Podipara, C.M.I., likely the greatest living Orientalist from Kerala, express in many ways the wide range of George Every's knowledge of the Christian East.

The title of his lectures is quite aptly chosen. The book deals with topics like the spread of Christianity in Asia, the particular character of Egyptian Christianity and its influence, the so-called

Monophysite question, the problem of the two wills in Christ and its ecclesiological implications, the life and thought of Christians living under Arab-Moslem rule, the intricate relations between crusaders and Eastern Christians, and the role played by the Holy Places in the uncertain relations between East and West until today. In all of these the author tries, often successfully, to make us understand not only what really happened, but why and how it happened. In an appendix entitled "Rome and the Christian East", he examines in some details the ecumenical problems that lie under the historical divisions between East and West, and proposes means towards creating better conditions of unity today and tomorrow.

The recent visit of John Paul II to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople has once again highlighted the need for Western Christians to understand the Christian East. This book will be a great help to achieve that end.

E. R. HAMBYE, S.J.

Methodism

John Wesley. His Life and Theology. By Robert G. TUTTLE, Jr. Exeter, The Paternoster Press, 1979. Pp. 368. £ 6.50. (Available from Asian Trading Corporation, 150 Brigade Road, Bangalore 560025.)

As the author himself clearly explains in his preface, his book has four primary objectives: to offer a reliable and readable biography of John Wesley (1703-1791), the founder of Methodism; to provide a good knowledge of Wesley's theological views and their development; to lead the reader to do further reading in Wesley's own works; to inspire the Christian today with renewed urge for revival.

He has divided the treatment of Wesley's life and works into four parts. Each of them contains three phases, the first two of which are always written in the first person, thus making Wesley speak about himself and his apostolate. The third phase consists in a rather detailed, accurate, and, as far as possible, objective analysis of what has been read in the two previous ones. Though such a way of writing could be highly artificial, in this case I found it rather attractive and even, on occasion, entrancing. This is all the more true because quotations from Wesley's own writings abound. A selected and well-drawn bibliography adds its worth to each of the four parts.

The origin and evolution of Wesley and of Methodism (the name came up at Oxford in 1729) are explained quite

Continued on p. 143. See pp. 113, 122.

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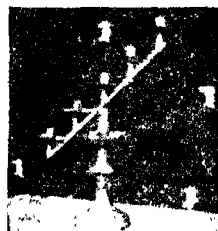
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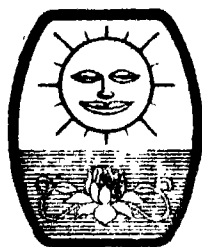
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In This Issue

Inter-religious dialogue, especially with Hinduism, has become a priority task of the Indian mission. But, as we commit ourselves to it more deeply, we are also made to realize more clearly its demands. One thing has become clear: dialogue is not served by a merely conceptual approach whereby religious ideas of various traditions are weighed, compared and contrasted. Religious conceptions cannot be separated from the over-all view of reality born of the religious experience which each tradition enshrines. This means that, in order truly to encounter the other, nothing less is required than to share with him in some manner in the religious experience of his tradition. Not, let it be made clear, that one's own faith is put between brackets in the process; for honesty to oneself and to the other forbids this. Nevertheless, understanding supposes empathy, and empathy implies entering into the other's world.

The present number of VIDYAJYOTI, is devoted to this problem. J. J. LIPNER, of the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, draws lessons from the past, and, keeping in mind the distinctive features of Vedantic Hinduism, provides guide-lines for a Christian approach to inter-faith understanding.

We then go back to two great Christian pioneers of the Hindu-Christian encounter, Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya and Abhishiktananda, both of whom continue to have a message for us today. The differences between the two men are great: they belonged to very different periods; one was a Bengali Brahmin who travelled the road to Christianity, the other a French Benedictine monk who travelled to India to encounter Hinduism; one engaged in India's political struggle and was disowned by Church authority, the other from monk became a hermit in his relentless search for the Absolute. But, beyond these differences, a common intuition animated the two men: Hinduism and Christianity must meet. And meet they did in their own person and life. Fr C. FONSECA traces the spiritual odyssey of Upadhyaya, exposes his convictions and throws light on the ambiguities which surrounded his last years. Fr J. D. M. STUART, of the Cambridge Brotherhood of the Ascended Christ, Delhi, shows Abhishiktananda deeply influenced by his early encounters with Sri Ramana Maharshi, the great advaitic saint of modern India. The impact of this saint—the centenary of whose birth fell last year and is still being celebrated—and through him the discovery of Arunachala, the Holy Mountain, remained a powerful factor in his life-long search to combine Hindu Wisdom and the Christian Mystery.

Through a Prism Brightly

THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE IN THE HINDU WORLD

J. J. LIPNER*

TODAY, I do not propose to turn your head with one of those cocktails that comparative religionists are thought to whip up so easily: a measure of Hinduism, a tot of Buddhism, a dash of Islam, all stirred vigorously in a Christian base. Such a concoction is more likely to befuddle than to stimulate our thinking for the important issue we must consider. Besides, my own methods of working in this field ill equip me for serving up such heady draughts. I find that a judicious blend of not more than two ingredients is best fitted to introduce one to the spirit of the enterprise. In the interests of clarity and seriousness then, and so as to reflect the areas of my own competence, I shall confine my comments in this lecture to Christian and Hindu viewpoints. It is hoped however that wherever possible, and I have had an eye to this possibility throughout, observations about principle and method in a Hindu-Christian context may be seen to apply to the encounter between Christianity and other religious traditions. A further consideration makes our choice particularly felicitous: it is undeniable that the most sustained and informative attempts at dialogue have occurred between Hindu and Christian points of view so that the conceptual tools for this sort of study have been forged mostly in the workshops of these two traditions.

It is reasonable to assume that most of you will be much more familiar with Christian approaches to particular issues than with the Hindu (or rather, a Hindu) one. So, after making some procedural points about the nature of our task, I shall refer to some of the central ideas and attitudes of the Hindu tradition that need to be kept in mind for dialogue. I shall then go on to consider some of the basic principles which I think must underlie a Christian approach to inter-faith understanding, and then conclude with points relevant for a fruitful encounter. I shall not have the time to treat any issue at

*Dr J. J. LIPNER is Lecturer in the Comparative Study of Religion, University of Cambridge. With minor changes this is the transcript of a public lecture entitled "The Christian Approach to Inter-religious Understanding" and delivered on November 7th, 1979, at Cambridge University in the "Truth in Religion" series.

length; hopefully, some of you may feel that this is a matter you would like to pursue more fully by yourselves, in your own time, through reflective reading and with an open mind. In any case, in my view, serious involvement in inter-religious understanding — or at least a sympathetic *attentiveness* to the voice of the non-Christian — can no longer be an expendable option for the thinking Christian. The very structure of the Christian kerygma imposes an obligation on the Christian to listen attentively, and with respect and openness, to the voice of God straining to be recognised in other religions. But now I begin to anticipate.^o

Theological Pluralism, Christian and Hindu

Before we proceed further, let us focus the poles of our discussion more sharply. Doubtless, you are all here in friendly and ecumenical spirit — all milk and honey. This is right and proper, though for a stimulating ferment of ideas we do not want too much of the milk of immature belief, or too much of a honeyed, sentimental theology. Perhaps for the Christians among you, it would not be too difficult to curdle this mix by pointed reference to the harsh and divisive history of religious controversy among Christians themselves, to the strident tones of dissenting voices in the debates through the ages. Even now, if I were to ask you, in more eirenic mood, committed believers as you may be from a number of Christian denominations, what the heart of Christianity is, what the precise relationship between Christ and the Cross, between the believer and his God, between God and the Church, a sympathetic Hindu onlooker would smile understandingly at the babel of answers that must ensue. Indeed, what is Christianity? An emasculated and abstract label which often seems to give its adherents a false sense of security and encourages them to idle thought and practice? Wilfred Cantwell Smith has asked pointedly in his valuable book *The Meaning and End of Religion*: is it Christianity that saves or Christ? We may ponder this awhile; it is an important question to which one must often return. But the point I wish to make here concerns an ineluctable, contemporary fact. This is the fact of Christian pluralism. Now I do not speak merely of the historical, doctrinal and liturgical diversity between the Christian camps — with which we are all familiar. This *inter-Christian* pluralism is but the historical symptom and temporal foretaste, had we but realised it (it would have softened the harshness of Christian dissensions immeasurably), of what lies at the very core of human religious thought and practice refracted as it is by the continuum of time and space: i.e. the pluralism inherent in the religious situation itself. And this pluralism has been reflected inevitably in the Christian traditions,

so that the theologising and living engagement of Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, and so on, have become irretrievably diversified within each denomination itself rather than only inter-denominational. And there is no going back; indeed, we ought not to want to go back. For, as I hope to show later on, to want to go back to some sort of 'pristine' Christian belief and practice, is a false and illusory hope. The riches of the Christian faith are too profound and multifaceted on the one hand, and human religious commitment too prone to complexify and take on situational shifts and emphases in the kaleidoscopic arena of man's interactions in the world on the other, for us even to expect a static picture in a particular historical articulation of the faith. The Christian's understanding of God's self-revealing must reflect, if it is to be a responsible and responsive one, the changing world of growth and development, and this principle applies no less to the faith-commitment of other religious traditions. The *experience* of the religious community differs from place to place and from time to time, governed by local socio-economic and cultural factors; and the *specialisation* of thinkers in the various theological disciplines, whether in scriptural studies, doctrine, history, etc., is such as to render each field of activity beyond the mastery of any one individual. Both these factors make the theological enterprise inevitably pluralistic. The pre-occupation must now be to work out criteria to establish inter- (and often intra-) disciplinary communication, and for harmonising precept with practice, rather than for establishing a comprehensive and 'encyclopaedic' theological overview. Today, the former is necessary and the latter impossible. We must not confuse the requisite for an organised integration of theological understanding with the desire for a monolithic theology. And he who, in the face of theology's pluralism, claims to possess the monopoly of Christian truth, the sacrosanct formula or mantra whereby he can penetrate the mystery of the Transcendent and take hold of the divine, whether on grounds of community experience, or tradition, or a special revelation, is an idolater in the true sense. He has set up in his own mind an idol which for him represents God, captures and confines the Absolute in the prison of finite thought; he alone claims to possess the key to immortality. Beware of false prophets: if the truth will set you free, how can it itself be bound ?

So in your answer to my question, "What is Christianity ?" not only will the Catholic give a different response from his Anglican friend, but he will often hear his own Catholic brother speak differently, and so too for all the other believers in the different confessions amongst you. But what of our Hindu onlooker ? I remarked earlier

that he would smile understandingly at the babel of replies. Well, it would be a babel if he were only understanding and no more: for he understands no doubt that a similar phenomenon would result if the corresponding question were put to a company of Hindus. But if he were informed as well as understanding, he would discern that amidst the babble there would be *patterns of meaning*, patterns that overlapped and inter-meshed and criss-crossed in a discernible family of ideas corresponding on the one hand, but without any neat fit, to the recognisable emphases of the different Christian families in the faith (and here two Methodists, for instance, will speak in harmony), and on the other, to shared beliefs and insights that cross denominational bounds within the recognisable Christian stream of thought (and here a Catholic, an Anglican and a Methodist might speak in tune). I submit that today more and more we must sharpen the ears of faith to discern these patterns of meaning within Christian discourse, and further, this being the burden of my lecture, to catch the unfamiliar if paradoxically Christian sense uttered from the depths of the structures of non-Christian religions themselves. To speak of the non-Christian is not the same as to speak of the un-Christian.

My next comment should occasion no surprise. Just as Christianity does not exist as a reified colossus, so too Hinduism does not exist as a monolithic abstraction. Indeed, what passes for Hinduism is even more diversified than Christianity. The word straddles a host of sects, beliefs and practices ranging from gross egocentric cults through various shades of agnosticism and serene monism to forms of genuine theistic expression that culminates in a monotheism of wide allegiance no less aggressive and uncompromising than some of its semitic counterparts. As Cantwell Smith has shown in the same book, the term 'Hinduism' itself is of fairly recent coinage, and this originally in the West. Even the western generic term 'religion' has no exact equivalent in the Sanskrit which is the source language for religious Hinduism. Theistic 'Hinduism' like 'Christianity' is a convenient label for a family of ideas and practices tenuously bound together by distinctive images and conceptual models, and eliciting a recognisable sort of response-for-living amidst a great variety of sectarian traditions. As indicated, the analogy of a human family is helpful for this way of talking. Just as in a family of three, say, two may have the same features in common with respect to the eyes and mouth, while another pair's claim to kinship may lie in the shape of the nose and perhaps a distinctive behavioural characteristic, there being no one criterion necessarily shared by all three simultaneously among a variety of combinations that mark them as a family, so too

in the households of the different religious traditions. Only, in the latter case, while the recognition of kinship may not be so difficult, the problem of establishing distinctive criteria is much more complex. Let me make one more clarification. Most of our remarks concerning theistic Hinduism will hold good for the tradition of Vedānta, which comprises a number of schools, and is the most influential stream of theology in traditional and contemporary Hinduism. It is nourished primarily by three sources: (i) the Vedas, especially the Upanishads, comprising the most authoritative scriptural canon of revelation about Brahman, the Transcendent One; (ii) the Brahma Sūtras, aphoristic utterances embodying the essence of the meaning of the Vedas; and (iii) the Bhagavadgītā or Song of the Lord Kṛṣṇa who is acknowledged to be *the* saving avatāra or descent of the deity into the human predicament. The Gītā, though technically not a part of the scriptural canon, has always wielded immense influence and authority in Vedānta and has inspired some of the most sublime theistic insights in that tradition. But though these three sources are seminal, we must not neglect that voluminous body of literature comprising the stories and teachings of the various Hindu saints and descents of the Lord which together with the law-books which contain directives for Hindu practice, illuminate and support the Vedas and vedantic theology. All this must be taken as a whole; but since the scope is so vast and the teachings so diverse and rich, we cannot hope for more than a glimpse into the heart of the vedantic tradition. Furthermore all the primary texts have been written in Sanskrit, and most of the secondary literature as well, so that it is only with the help of Sanskrit that we can undertake the most penetrating study of this tradition. In the discussion that follows, we must bear in mind the limitations inherent to a situation in which the content of one language-based conceptual stream is sought to be understood through a very different one. Relevant to this is the consideration that no religious message, Christian, Hindu or otherwise can be poured whole from the vessel of one cultural milieu into another. This is an inappropriate model for missionary witness and inter-religious understanding, yet as we shall note presently, it was precisely this model for communication that held sway unchallenged for a long time when religions encountered each other, and which even today continues to exert great influence. Rather, in the situation of which we speak workers are beginning to realise that the receiving medium must transform the content creatively if it is to become an integral part of its new environment, in the manner films, television and radio act upon their material. This realisation will clearly refashion our whole approach to religious dialogue.

Past Christian-Hindu Encounter

Further, we note that Hinduism has been in direct and sustained contact with western ideas and Christianity for about 500 years, ever since the advent of the Portuguese in the early 16th century. But the most significant and dynamic encounter has occurred over the last 200 years or so, especially with the British expression of Christian belief and practice. Colonial rule in India introduced a very unfamiliar ingredient into the rich and more or less tranquil mix of religious traditions already simmering in the Indian pot (the exception to this was and is Islam, which throughout its long history in the subcontinent never really blended with the native religions). It is true that the St Thomas Christians, as they are called, who claim rather dubiously to be the spiritual descendants of Thomas the Apostle, and who, less dubiously this time, were established in local churches in South India from very early times after the beginning of the Christian era, were the earliest, settled Christian presence on Indian soil. But they very soon developed a ghetto mentality from the doctrinal point of view, while socially they tended to be absorbed into the caste-system which they accepted. Moreover, they frittered away the opportunities to witness to their faith by internal squabbles, so that they never really made an impact on the great theological movements that ebbed and swelled during the course of South India's religious history. It is a sad commentary on the South Indian Christian presence that, before the relatively recent advent of the British, there is no clear, indeed no recognisably implicit reference—occasionally scholars speculate as to one or two exceptions—to Christian ideas in the works of the great contemporary vedantins such as Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. As far as they were concerned, it seems, the Christian message had nothing special to say to them, and a historical study of the reasons for this will show, I believe, that this silence was no fault of theirs. It appears that until very recent times, Christianity in India has been doomed to one of two equally sorry fates. It has either withdrawn into itself and shut the doors, thereby negating its own inner missionary dynamism; or it has misconstrued and perverted this dynamism through an aggressive policy of religious and cultural domination by reflecting the political imperialism of its representatives. Mainly, but not exclusively, over the last 30 years or so, in independent India, the processes for true understanding between the two traditions have begun to take place. Yet, in spite of the unhappy history of Christianity in India, British rule did make possible two vital pre-requisites for sound dialogue. Firstly, it established a community of interests between the more influential Christian thinkers and the Hindu refor-

mers. The Christians' theoretical stress on human equality and freedom (which thinking Hindus were quick to realise had social and political implications) challenged (English) educated Hindus to abolish the nefarious abuses that had inevitably taken over the caste system, such as, the exploitation of the lower castes, the polygamy practised by the Kulin Brahmins, the ban on widow remarriage, and various other forms of intolerable discrimination against women. On the basis of these shared interests, and under the influence of Christian precepts if not practice, far-sighted Hindus themselves used their high caste-status to good effect; viz. to expose the cankers in the social system and to reinterpret its hereditary classifications in terms of the moral worth of an individual rather than the circumstances of his birth. Secondly, since most — not all — of these champions of social and eventually political dignity were English educated, and had imbibed the liberal political, social and religious ideas then emerging from Britain, they felt challenged to rehabilitate or re-interpret their religion for the benefit of western Christians both at home and abroad, by expressing their understanding of Hindu truths in English. The British on the other hand plugged away at printing Bibles and other religious literature in local languages. Both sides of this process, which often became a war of propaganda, had very mixed success. Their methodological presuppositions were often linguistically immature (exact equivalents of words and ideas were, not surprisingly, unsuccessfully sought), and psychologically counter-productive (the tactics of ridicule and humiliation were freely employed, though it must be admitted that Christians of all denominations were on the whole more guilty than their counterparts here, understandably perhaps, since they were socially and politically advantaged). Furthermore, these attempts were generally doctrinally uninformed (very few participants bothered to study sympathetically what the other party believed). But in spite of all these mistakes, a concerted attempt, regarded as viable and worth pursuing, was made. However shaky the bridges, however one-way the traffic at times, people thought it was worth getting through to the other side.

Distinctive Features of Vedantic Hinduism

Let us consider now some of the distinctive features of vedantic Hinduism, which as a generic expression, covers the live religious options for Hindus today. Unlike Christianity, with its history of verbal formulations and anathemas, Councils and doctrinal pronouncements, i.e. its traditional stress on verbalising and intellectualising beliefs, Hindu tradition has always laid great emphasis on orthopraxy. This becomes the performance of one's caste duties

and the ritual practices of one's stage and station in life: in short, one's *dharma* (*varṇāśrama dharma*). There is no exact English equivalent for 'dharma'; words like 'duty', 'law', 'religion' have been used, but each captures only aspects of the term in its wide range of uses. Every Hindu, whatever caste he may belong to — even the outcaste is often no exception here — must perform his dharma, i.e. those duties and practices either in a social or private context, which support (*dhr̥*) his existence in this life. An important facet of dharma in the social dimension then is the caste system, with all its ramifications. A Hindu's caste or lack of it influences his social relationships, moral evaluations, and religious beliefs. The centrality of the caste-order for Hinduism (I am not at present concerned with the plethora of castes and sub-castes there happen to be) must be appreciated by anyone seeking to understand the Hindu mind, and the possibilities for dialogue. But equally important is the appreciation that caste in India today, chiefly in urbanised areas, in the wake of independence and all that led up to it, and in the grip of western technology and an open secularisation creeping over the land, is in the melting-pot. The barriers between the higher castes, especially with respect to commensality and marriage, are dissolving, and even the boundaries separating the higher and lower castes in such matters, are fast being eroded. Caste is no longer tied rigidly to specific occupations. The dignity of all human labour is beginning to be appreciated. Untouchability, while it certainly exists in some form or other, and indeed seems to be staging a deplorable revival in some areas in the politically chaotic climate of India at present,¹ is forbidden by the Constitution and recognised at least, as an evil by the majority of Hindus. In other words, caste, under all these modern pressures, is slowly often forcedly and unwittingly, being re-interpreted. Now, we do not need to preach the *spiritual* dignity and value of all men to Hindus. This has been an inherent and central truth of Vedānta since its very beginning. But what Hindus are recognising now, through the catalytic effect of Christian teaching with its stress on the freedom and worth of the human *person* — which is not the same as stressing the worth of the spirit or ātman (the concept of ātman or spirit does not directly connote man's materiality, while the concept of human personhood does) — is that it is not much use emphasising the greatness of the spirit if social and political discrimination and material deprivation for the *man* is allowed to carry on unchecked. In other words, *if caste is to be rethought, then dharma has to be understood afresh too*. The dharma of social action or seva-dharma, one of the chief ingredients in Gandhi's and the late Jayaprakash Narayan's healing potion for

1. N.B.: This is written in November 1979.

modern India must needs be extracted from the depths of vedantic teaching. And this is not very difficult to do, granted the vedantic belief in the universality of the ātman, the fresh approach to caste, and many illustrious examples of service and fraternal love among the Hindu holy men of India's history. Vivekananda (1863-1902), one of the most influential thinkers of modern India in this respect, lamenting the social apathy of his countrymen, has said words to the effect that it is the Hindus who preach Vedānta and the dignity and equality of all men, but it is the Christians who practise it. So the role of caste and dharma, central facets of the Hindu way of life, must be understood in their changing and traditional circumstances for the dialogue with Christianity.

Further, an important consideration for the Christian in assuming a stance for dialogue with Hindus is sensitivity to what Swami Abhishiktananda, a Christian monk (and a Breton originally) who spent the last 25 years of his life in India imbibing vedantic spirituality, called the Hindu gift of interiority. This gift has been utilised and developed through the various techniques of yoga (which must not be conflated with its external and somewhat sensational manifestations in the lissome postures of comely females on television, or the contortions of India-rubber fakirs in picture-books). The technique of yoga is the technique of interiorisation: the trained process of penetrating single-mindedly to the depths of the soul or the cave of the heart (as the vedantins would say), to hear and to see what lies in the still waters beneath the turbulent surface of the mind. It is in these depths, Abhishiktananda claimed, that God reveals and speaks, and the Hindu sages have plunged down and surfaced from of old with many God-given treasures of the spirit for their countrymen. Abhishiktananda believed that these treasures must now be shared with the world, including Christians, through a process of give and take. I shall quote him at some length now,² not only because he makes valuable observations about the relation between the Hindu and Christian stances, but also because these observations can with ready profit be extended to the Christian encounter with religious traditions other than the Hindu.

The encounter in our days between western Christianity and India is no less providential and decisive than the encounter nineteen centuries ago between Judaic Christianity and the Romano-Hellenic world. God is now bringing about a meeting between the Church and India at a given time of history. Christians here as everywhere have to look at the 'signs of the times' and try to decipher in them the call of God to themselves (p. 7)

2. Extracts from "The Church in India — A Self-examination", in *Religion and Society*, September 1968, pp. 5-19.

Christianity was . . . and still is, received fairly easily by have-not people. Those who *have* do not hear the call because they feel no need for anything new. Real Hindus are in this respect just the same as real Christians. Real Christians have no urge to become Hindus nor do deep Hindus want to become Christians. Even when they realize the inadequacy of their own spiritual life, neither Christians nor Hindus will put the blame on their respective dharma, but on their own personal weakness and egoism (p. 11) . . .

In most cases, Christianity appears to the Hindu as something western, with all the advantages and disadvantages of that fact. The collusion so fateful between the messengers of Christ and the colonial powers is now something of the past, and it may even be regarded that it was unavoidable. Yet the confusion so caused led to such a feeling of distrust that a long time must pass before it is eradicated. Even apart from this, it is a fact that Christianity still presents itself now in India with all the prestige of western nations and cultures, those which lead the whole world in power, riches, and scientific and technical knowledge.

We should here humbly recognize that such things do not at all impress the real Hindu. For him, religion has nothing to do with prestige, riches and human efficiency. Probably the Christian dharma would appeal much more to the Hindu heart and mind if it had nothing to speak for it in the temporal plane — as was actually the case when Galilean fishermen and Syrian artisans propagated the Gospel in the Roman empire (p. 12) . . .

. . . there is always a danger of Christians remaining contented with the wonderful externals of their Church and practically forgetting her most essential dimension, that of *interiority*, of mystery.

Perhaps in this context it can be said that one of the fruits to be expected from the actual encounter between Hinduism and Christianity will be a renewal of the awareness among Christians of that very dimension of the interiority of their religion (p. 15).

Now I am well aware that this extract contains a number of debatable presuppositions regarding method and goal for the dialogic process, and we shall have occasion to take up some of them later. But it expresses well the sort of poverty often projected in the Christian image to observers and the barriers to understanding thus implied.

There is a methodological issue to which we shall now turn which can be illuminatingly dealt with in the context of the two religious traditions we have been considering. We have often heard it said that Hinduism is religiously tolerant and all-embracing; that it teaches the relativism of all truth in the shadow of the mystery of the Transcendent One; that it does not matter really what you believe since all rivers lead eventually to the same infinite ocean — what matters is the sincerity with which you seek the Goal. Like most generalisations, this statement contains half-truths and distortions. The rather precipitate espousal of the relativism of religious truth is a fairly recent phenomenon in Hinduism: the result of inept and uninformed theosophical theorising over the turn of the last century,

and of the teaching of such modern religious leaders as Ramakrishna and Gandhi. But in fact in traditional Vedānta and even today for its sectarian adherents, it has been a central concern to take hold of truth (i.e. satyāgraha: Gandhi's method if not conclusion) and to articulate in definite terms the saving teachings, however elusive these may be. The history of Vedānta may well be described as a history of doctrinal controversy. Indeed, the Hindu's concern to absorb, to assimilate is a concern for unity, an expression of his passionate belief in the oneness of the source of all truth, however it may have been refracted in the human milieu. It is not an affirmation of the relativism of truth, though it may sometimes have degenerated into that, or the assertion that the quest for truth matters not, so long as we act sincerely.

Is there no substance then in the claim for Hindu doctrinal tolerance and comprehensiveness? I think there is—in so far as there remains a procedural openness in the modern Hindu mind that is unique and distinctive. Whereas the Christian tradition has a long history of identifying heresies and seeking sacrosanct verbal formulations of doctrine, the vedantin has been more concerned with the spirit than with the letter, fully aware that too much stress on the letter kills. This has resulted, within the quest for truth, in the earlier vedantins striving to grasp the Transcendent through a common fund of scriptural images and metaphors rather than in more analytic, propositional forms, and for the moderns in an ability and willingness to wrestle with conceptual models of understanding drawn from schools and traditions other than one's own; in "the recognition", to borrow a statement from John Robinson's recently published and excellent book, *Truth is Two-Eyed*,³ "that the light that enlightens every man... in no way cancels but on the contrary crowns the revelation in and through the multiplicity of lights. The unique does not absorb or exclude the many" (p. 99). The reason for this, in my opinion, is not only the vital awareness on the part of the Hindu of the unicity (rather than the identity) of all truth and of the oneness of its source, but the absence of an institutional, magisterial Church in Hinduism—a fact which in the broader context has its advantages as well as disadvantages. The much more restricted access generally experienced by the Christian to conceptual models of religious truth other than those of his own stream, has presented him, in his efforts to articulate the uniqueness of Christ, with a paradox of daunting proportions. Again, let me quote Bishop Robinson:

Any stress... on the uniqueness or finality of the Christ will have to take into account the fact—which the Christian finds he has to live with much

3. London, SCM Press, 1979.

more than the Hindu — that the more one talks of a *once and for all* revelation or of an eschatological act of God *in* history the more paradoxical and problematic this appears (p. 100).

... On the one hand, it is possible so to elevate and isolate the particular to the point at which the Christ becomes an anomalous exception, who is unique because he is abnormal, a cuckoo in the human nest, without continuity with or relevance for the rest of history and mankind (p. 101).

... Meanwhile, from the other side, there is an emphasis on the non-exclusive, on the here but *also* there (and everywhere), which soon reduces revelation to sheer relativity and loses any criterion of discrimination ... (p. 102).

We have noted that this last judgement applies more readily to some recent lines of Hindu thinking than to the majority of the traditional sects. We may conclude this section by noting that the vedantin's greater freedom to range more widely in his theologising, to test and to experiment in the articulation of religious truth and experience, has not yet resulted in a full-blown historico-critical handling of his sacred texts. While he has always been more ready than the Christian to read symbolically rather than literally, it is the characteristic absence of a stress on historicity in his interpretation of religious events throughout, that has resulted in a symbolical rather than historico-critical appreciation of the scriptures. Not for him the confrontation between science and faith, between the scriptural genesis of man and the theory of evolution. *This is not because this is a crisis the Hindu has still to face, but because he has bypassed it through the very nature of his understanding of the scriptures and the world.* For the vedantin the scriptures have always been regarded as essentially inculcating truths about brahmavidyā, i.e. the knowledge of Brahman and his relation to the world, not about the origin of man and the universe. Of course, in the sacred writings of the Hindus, myths concerning the genesis of man and the world abound, as do myths about nearly everything else, but the Hindu has always tended to look upon these as instructive stories pointing the way, shaping perspectives and building frameworks for thought, and not as statements of fact. And even if these stories were accepted literally, their purport was essentially didactic for truths about the Spirit rather than for the mechanics of the material. Once again there are strengths and weaknesses for one's stance-for-living in the implications of both viewpoints: the historical as opposed to the symbolical. Here I am only concerned to define the stance and discern its pointing — the implications I shall leave alone.

Christian Approach to Inter-Faith Understanding

Let us consider now, in the light of all that has gone before, the sorts of Christian approach one may follow towards other religions.

Let us accept as a working definition the statement that dialogue is an open-ended meeting between two or more persons committed to different outlooks, based on mutual attentiveness and respect. It is open-ended; in other words, one puts oneself at risk; one is ready to change one's view; to reconstruct, to accommodate insights offered or initiated by the other; to be sensitive to criticism. If one is not prepared to do this, if one a priori takes up a position in which points of contact between one's own faith and those of others are either in principle irrelevant, or de facto unprofitable, one can then hardly speak of dialogue or even serious inter-religious understanding. I detect in the Barthian stance from the Christian side, and in Radhakrishnan's position on the Hindu side, which place all human endeavour at articulating religion under the judgement of a noumenal transcendent revelation, a bias towards the first alternative. Hendrik Kraemer, on the other hand, in such works as *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*⁴ and *Religion and the Christian Faith*,⁵ seems to follow the second alternative when he is not prepared to acknowledge anything of *healing* value for the Christian faith-response, emerging from the encounter with other religions. These views may be generically called "absolutist" stances to inter-religious contact, and if they imply an unwillingness to listen to unfamiliar voices, do they not also deaden one's sensitivity to the call of one's own faith to review and renew constantly the meaning of one's own commitment? Nor will it do to say that the more one investigates promising insights in other faiths in their own context and discovers how embedded they are therein, the more one becomes aware of how profitless it is to incorporate these into one's own position? For it is precisely one of the goals of dialogue to follow up illuminating aspects and questings in other viewpoints and to *creatively transform* and integrate them into one's own changing perspective. This is what the early Christians sought to do with a number of the Jewish and Hellenic ideas with which they were familiar. The experiment must be continued by the Christian in terms of the teachings of other cultures, and if it be fraught with risk, this is but an indication of how necessary the task is. I must now indicate how the Christian message *of its own nature* tends to open-ended dialogue in the way described. The reason is not very far to seek. It lies in the heart of the Christian revelation. Let me start by quoting from an article entitled "Christ in the Non-Christian Religions" by Karl Rahner.⁶

4. London, Edinburgh House Press, 1938.

5. London, Lutterworth Press, 1956.

6. In *God's Word among Men*, edited by G. GISPert-SAUCH, Delhi, Vidya-jyoti, 1973, pp. 95-104.

... Two presuppositions should be stated. First of all we presuppose a supernatural salvific will of God which is universal and truly operative in the world. This implies the possibility of supernatural faith in God's revelation everywhere, namely in the whole length and breadth of human history (p. 96).

The second presupposition is this: when a non-Christian gains salvation through faith, hope and love, we cannot accept that the non-Christian religions play no role or only a negative role in that gaining of justification and salvation.... If on principle a non-Christian religion could not and ought not to have absolutely any positive influence on the supernatural salvation of a man who is not Christian, then the salvation of such a man would be conceived as totally non-social and non-historical — and this contradicts the historical and social (ecclesial) character of Christianity itself. Special theories of private revelations, extraordinary illuminations (specially at the hour of death), etc., have been proposed to account for divine revelation to a man who has not been reached by Christian preaching. Such postulates are arbitrary and improbable, and one does not see why they should be allowed to come into play only in connection with extraordinary circumstances. Such special interventions contradict the fundamental character of Christian revelation and the nature of man who even in his most personal history is always a being in society whose innermost decisions are mediated by the concreteness of his social and historical life and do not take place in a sphere which on principle is separated from his life (p. 97).

On careful reading, this passage makes three points. Firstly, it speaks in the abstract, in terms of principles. It says that in principle, God *may* reveal himself in non-Christian religions if we take his salvific will for all seriously, but that it is up to the worker in the field to see if and how this is so. In this lecture we have gone further than Rahner's starting point and indicated concretely, in the context of Hindu and Christian viewpoints, where fruitful dialogue may be pursued. Secondly, it says that using the historicist nature of the Christian revelation as a clue to discerning how God deals with man, we perceive that God may reveal himself in and through the non-Christian religious tradition itself, i.e. publicly, rather than by extraordinary and private ways for non-Christian individuals (though it does not absolutely exclude such ways of divine intervention, of course). This again is a very important observation and strikes at the root of the absolutist approach; it is also the principle underlying such approaches as Abhishiktananda's in which one plunges discursively or on a more practical level into the world of the non-Christian religion. Rahner's statement represents an important shift in the official Roman Catholic stance over the last 30 years or so and ratified by the Second Vatican Council, in which the normal locus of divine revelation outside the Church, under the normative guidance of its explicit Christian expression, becomes the non-Christian *community* rather than the non-Christian individual. In the light of this reappraisal of the age-old dictum "*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*" one

may with some justification conclude that in this instance truth is two-faced rather than two-eyed, but this is a separate issue with which I am at present not concerned. Thirdly, Rahner's comments point to the sort of relationship existing between God's self-revelation and the non-Christian religion, without going into the types of Christian response that may be made in this situation. Here too we must be more specific. For it seems an inescapable conclusion to me that on whatever plane the Christian may respond — whether on a discursive level, or on a contemplative one — he must be possessed of a twofold awareness. First, he cannot expect, for the success of his enterprise, his own familiar version of the truth, nourished by a particular historical conceptual and cultural stream, to be *echoed* straightforwardly in its various aspects in the non-Christian tradition. He is not meeting this tradition on *his* own terms, i.e. as crypto-Christian, but on God's terms which are not exhaustively bound to any one milieu. From this it follows that for the Christian message to take root in a non-western culture having its own particular modes of thought and other conditioning factors, the structure and expression of that message will be transformed in that culture in a way analogous to the transforming function of communication-media, such as television and radio, upon their material. In time this will result in an articulation of the faith in eastern lands not always readily recognisable by western Christians, yet within a shared pattern of meanings and responses for living that mark both eastern and western perspectives as distinctively Christian. Or consider another model if you will. Just as a shaft of white light when refracted through a prism is substantially altered by being split into its component colours each of which derives from the same source, is capable of illuminating, but because it is different from the other colours throws a different light on things — so too the Christian message must be refracted in and differently light up the diverse cultures it penetrates.

Second, serious engagement in inter-religious understanding does not mean trivialising or abandoning one's own faith. On the contrary, I have discovered, in common with others who have taken part in dialogue, that the perception of the riches of one's own tradition is enhanced and one's involvement deepened. I do not advocate what I have called elsewhere⁷ "reduction dialogue" which to my way of thinking is represented by the authors of *The Myth of God Incarnate*,⁸ that is, the demythologising of the core of Christian belief based on

7. In an article entitled "Truth-claims and Inter-religious Dialogue", in *Religious Studies*, Vol. 12, n. 2, June 1976.

8. Edited by John Hick, London, SCM Press, 1977.

a rationalistic (rather than rational) approach to the content of religious faith.

Models for a Fruitful Dialogue

How are we then to proceed in the enterprise? The time has come now, I believe, for us to look increasingly towards the role of models in our approach. Models incorporate frameworks of thought, each self-contained, with its own life and attendant vocabulary — though a model can be more or less open to other models. The purpose of a model is to make its referent, or that of which it is a model, more manageable and therefore intelligible. When so much of the world of religious experience and discourse concerns what is essentially a mystery — its very core is the fathomless Transcendent — models serve to illuminate aspects of the mysterious, to open its secrets even if only partially, to our understanding. Take for instance the well-known example of the Church. In its profound reality, the Church is a mystery. We cannot penetrate it and often find ourselves living on its surface. So we resort to models to understand it, often without admitting that we have done so. We talk in terms of the model of the Church as Institution, with its explicit vocabulary of (visible) sacramental signs, an ecclesiastical hierarchy, liturgical practices and so on. But we have been finding this model increasingly deficient to cover our experience of many other aspects of the Church, so we try to make up for this by also speaking of the Church as the People of God, Body of Christ, Witness of the Word, and so on, each of these models comprising its own distinctive terminology which partially but not totally, overlaps with that of others. Thus, in contradistinction to the “external” vocabulary of Church as Institution we have the “hidden” language of Church as People of God — the latter emphasising the hidden dimension of the Church’s membership, i.e. all those, call them what you will — “implicit” or “anonymous” Christians — who are persons of good will, whether they have been formally baptised or not. Another phenomenon that is at heart beyond the scope of human reason, in spite of so many attempts, some of penetrating value, to understand it, is the relation between what the west has been wont to call the “spiritual” and the “material”. I shall mention this matter briefly again presently. But the point to note here is that models often cannot be *logically* dovetailed: that is not how they work. This is because the distinctive vocabulary of each tends to have a normative and exclusivist emphasis with respect to that of the others. Also you cannot logically map out what is at heart a mystery — this is the misguided hope, it seems to me, of the rationalist reductionists of religious belief. To acknowledge the need

for models of discourse is to acknowledge that human understanding has its limits. Our religious models must co-exist in *creative tension*, as the nuclei of a matrix for illuminating language about God and the world; as launching pads for saving contact with the divine.

Let me conclude with a brief word about some of the more fertile models, to my way of thinking, for a dialogue between Hindu and Christian. I submit that the figure so beloved of Christian missionaries and indeed of Christians in general — that of Christ as Sovereign and King — must be played down. The kingship of Christ is still too readily and bitterly associated with colonial rule and the kingship of the men who spoke in his name; with the economic sovereignty and political power of the west. By this I do not mean to imply that the concept of lordship (*maheśvaratvam*, *aiśvāryatvam*) plays no significant role in theistic Hinduism. Quite the contrary. But its deployment at present is not one for the western theologian to make in his encounter with Vedānta. Rather the Church in India, which alas is still so firmly associated with the west, may be more wise to stress Christ as the suffering servant, as one who ministers and heals, as he who invites all to his fellowship through the gateway of the Cross. This image will surely speak deeply to the India now groaning in poverty and deprivation. Again, may we not consider, for our purposes, Christ as liberator — he who frees from the shackles of caste and fear, from superstition and anxiety? One of the most distinctive epithets describing the liberated state for Hindus, is “*abhayatvam*” or fearlessness. This is not only or even specifically the fearlessness of a hero on the battlefield, but religiously, connotes the lack of fear that stems from the deep-rooted anxieties attaching to selfishness, the *angst* of the human situation.

What models may the Christian study with profit, from the Hindu side, to deepen his understanding of God and the world? One touched on before, comes readily to mind, and indeed, without its Hindu colouring, is receiving increasing attention in the west. I am thinking of the model of the world as God’s body, so richly developed by the great vedantin, Rāmānuja. Today, as we more clearly perceive that the relation between God or spirit and world or matter is reflected in the intimate but mysterious union between soul or ātman and body or śarīram, it is challenging to unpack Rāmānuja’s multidimensional model of this union; to investigate the world as depending on God even as the body depends on the soul; as expressing and being expressed by him even as the body expresses and is expressed by the soul; as accomplishing his end in all things, even as the body brings about the soul’s ends and chief End. Further, Vedānta has developed more

powerfully than any other theology models of God's immanence to all things and the self's interiority. But this cannot be developed here. What I have tried to do in the time at my disposal is to show that the attempt is both called for and worthwhile.

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previously thought, willed, moved about, and been worried about each and every thing. Disconnection. All that consciousness with which I was moving about was no longer mine, but as for myself, I still was. . . ." (*Diary*, 11.9.73).

It may be seen from the above extracts how deeply Abhishikta-nanda drank in the *upadesha* of Sri Ramana, and then went on to live his own authentic experience of the unique Mystery.

Sri Ramana Maharshi and Abhishik- tananda

J. D. M. STUART

IN our days how great was the spiritual radiance spread throughout Tamil Nadu and far beyond by that young brahmin of Madurai who one fine day quietly walked out of his father's house and made straight for Arunāchala. . . . During the fifty years which he passed on the Mountain, how many thousands of those who thirsted for truth and salvation came to prostrate before him and to sit at his feet, eagerly drinking in the teaching of his lips, and far more deeply still quenching their thirst from his silence."¹

These words were written by Swami Abhishiktananda in 1954, when he himself was living as a hermit in one of the caves on Arunāchala. He was one of those who drank deeply from Sri Ramana's words, and much more so from his silence. To the end of his life he never ceased to speak with love and reverence of the Sage whom he regarded as the perfect example of Vedānta.

Abhishiktananda had the darshan of Sri Ramana on only two occasions, once in January 1949, just before his last illness, and again six months later. He recorded his impressions in his Diary and later wrote them up in his book *The Secret of Arunāchala*.²

He noted in the *Diary*³ that when he was introduced to Sri Ramana, "the Maharshi replied with a gesture of the hand, accompanied by a smile filled with a kindness that was impossible to forget." But at first he did not know what to make of the Sage to whose darshan he had looked forward for so long. He gazed at him, but all that he could see was "a kindly grandfather. . . happy, peaceful and smiling among his grandchildren" (*Diary*, 24.1.49). Where was the 'halo'?

He took his problem to an English lady who was living near the ashram. "Your trouble is that you are not receptive; you want to

1. *Ermîtes du Sacclānanda*, Paris, Casterman, 1956, pp. 48-49.

2. Delhi, ISPCK, 1979.

3. Abhishiktananda's *Diary* is still unpublished. The extracts from it have been very kindly supplied by Mme Odette Baumer-Despeigne, without whose help this article could not have been written.

know, to understand; instead, simply be open before Bhagavan", was her advice. He took the point and began trying to 'listen' at a deeper level. As he sat in the darshan hall the chanting of the Vedic hymns, assisted perhaps by the feverish cold which came upon him, had the effect of relaxing the fetters of his mind. "Even before my mind was able to recognize the fact, and still less to express it, the invisible halo of this Sage had been perceived by something in me deeper than any words."

The fever soon forced him to return home to Kulittalai. But as he lay in bed, "in my feverish dreams... it was the Maharshi who unremittingly appeared to me... the Maharshi bringing the true India which transcends time and of which he was for me the living and compelling symbol." Then he added significantly:

My dreams also included attempts — always in vain — to incorporate in my previous mental structures, without shattering them, these powerful new experiences which my contact with the Maharshi had brought to birth; new as they were, their hold on me was already too strong for it ever to be possible for me to disown them.⁴

After this Abhishiktananda only saw Sri Ramana once more, in July 1949, when he gave darshan shortly after an operation. This time he was better prepared to profit from the grace: "I did my best not to allow my efforts at rationalization to get in the way as on the first visit, and tried simply to attend to the hidden influence." As he had already begun to glimpse the eternal in Sri Ramana, the withdrawal of his physical presence (his mahāsamādhi occurred on 14.4.1950) did not break the bond that was forming.

Abhishiktananda had been studying the Upanishads for several years and felt the attraction of advaita. His contact with Sri Ramana, a living example of advaita, gave to his study and meditation an existential direction. He realized that advaita is nothing until it is *lived*. He therefore sought to open himself to Sri Ramana in every way that he could, by meditating on the Maharshi's own profound poems and on the *Sri Ramana Gita*, trying to listen beyond the words to the depth of spirit from which they came; at the same time he took every opportunity of meeting those of his disciples who had most deeply realized Sri Ramana's 'message'. One of these spoke to him of the 'mystery of the heart':

Find the heart deep within oneself, cut all the bonds which restrain this heart and hold it at the level of sense and external consciousness, all the fleeting identifications of what one *is* with what one *has* or what one *does*.⁵

4. *The Secret of Arunāchala*, p. 9.

5. *The Secret*..., p. 14.

On his next visit to the Sriramanāśramam in November 1951, Abhishiktananda discovered — or was discovered by — Arunāchala; and this also drew him nearer to Sri Ramana. "It was with me as with Ramana; Arunāchala awakened me" (*Diary*, 30.5.72); he was "truly reborn at Arunāchala under the guidance of the Maharshi" (*Diary*, 29.7.55). For many years the Swami had been leading an austere life as a Benedictine monk, and since coming to India he had begun to live as a sannyasi in his ashram at Kulittalai. Now he discovered what it was to live as a hermit in the caves of the holy mountain. In 1952 he spent five months there, mostly in *mauna* and living on *bhikshā*, and he returned for further periods each year until 1955. Before him was the ideal of Sri Ramana, of the Desert Fathers in Egypt, and of his own St Benedict of Nursia, who loved the solitude of his cave where "alone in the presence of the heavenly Witness, he abode with himself."

In these times the grace of Arunāchala took hold of him in ways which are of course indescribable in words, though he gives hints in his *Diary* and in letters to his friends; while the books which he later wrote — so say those who 'know' — could only have been written by one who was *evamvid*.

It was Sri Ramana who led him to Arunāchala, and it was there, partly through the silence, and partly through the words and example of other holy people, that he deepened his understanding of Sri Ramana's *upadesha*. This experience, so early in his life in India, was decisive. Although in his case there was no sudden, once-for-all, illumination, there were moments which he afterwards called "the high points of my whole life" (*Diary*, 30.3.53). In fact it was many years before this experience was fully 'integrated', and finally, it seems, only in the heart-attack of July 1973, when he hung between life and death, and realized that "the Awakening is independent of any situation whatever, independent of all the *dvandvas*, and in the first place of the *dvandva* called life-death" (*Diary*, 11.9.73). In the last year of his life he wrote to a friend: "(There has been) nothing new since Arunāchala. But the 'mind' finds itself always carried a little further on, so there are stages" (Letter of 1.2.73). And to another friend, a month or so before his death, he said: "There were times there (in the caves of Arunāchala) that were so high. And this was vastly deeper than I thought at the time. Words that I wrote in those days were not fully understood until very long afterwards."

Some hints of his experience on Arunāchala are given in these passages from his *Diary*:

...the realization of this 'all-pervading' presence of God in my acts as in my being, as in everything... Satori, the illumination, is the real baptism, this new view of oneself and of the world, not an intellectual knowledge, but an abyssal, cataclysmal transfiguration of one's being (*Diary*, 14, 17.7.52).

There is a mystery in Arunāchala. What is this mystery? Why have so many in the past been drawn by its 'magic'? Like elder sons they have come from every direction. And I have come from beyond the seas. Fascinated. Why this strange sensation? Why, despite all the inconveniences of life, do I feel happy and at peace here as nowhere else? This fascination which has attracted ascetics over the centuries. There is something in the caves of Arunāchala. Sages have lived there and have impregnated the rocks with their inner life — and yet there is more to it than that... Brahman himself inhabits the cave of the heart, say the Upanishads. Here is the cave of Brahman himself, not so much that he lives in me, as that I live in him. If it is still possible for there to be he and me! *Tad!* Ramana lived the mystery of the unity [i.e., advaita] in Arunāchala, the illuminated, the illuminating... (*Diary*, 4.3.53).

On entering this place which is so isolated and so pure, these words sang in my heart: 'This shall be my resting-place for ever; here will I dwell for I have a delight therein' [a verse sung at the profession of a Benedictine monk]... How will God's will for me be manifested in the coming days?... 'Boldly take the final plunge into pure advaita', is what is constantly whispered by the voice which continually sings in the depth of my heart, and which the other day employed Sri Ram of L. [an advaitin friend] to convey the same message to me from outside also. In fact I am more and more distant from 'saguna' Hinduism. But for the moment I am only playing at advaita. Like one who is about to take a bathe in the sea, I feel the temperature of the water and keep on deferring the headlong plunge which alone will give peace (*Diary*, 23.3.53).

A few days after the last entry he took the opportunity of meditating in the underground crypt of the Patala Linga, which he later called his true 'meeting' with the Maharshi. This meeting "took place on a plane that has nothing in common with any visual, auditory or psychic phenomenon whatever — literally at the one level where Ramana can always be truly met."

The place of birth and the changing circumstances of life are really of little importance to him who has chosen — or rather, has been granted — to exist in this world as no more than a sign, a *linga*, of the Lord, while his own self, his *I*, has been swallowed up for good in the overwhelming experience of him who alone IS. This is what the young Brahmanasami understood at the moment when, in the heart of the Temple, he had recognized the Lord Arunāchala. And that is why from then on also it was only at that level that he in his turn can truly be met by anyone who is himself engaged on the inner quest for his true being.⁶

They — Ramana and Arunāchala — have become infused into my flesh, they are woven into the fibres of my heart! (*Diary*, 24.11.56).

6. *The Secret*..., pp. 112, 114.

The following quotations will indicate how deeply Abhishiktananda digested, integrated the *upadesha* of Sri Ramana:

(His teaching) is simply to go back to the source of myself and to *grasp* (but not intellectually) that the 'authorship', the *Aham*, which governs our corporal and mental activity, cannot be divided into two — God and myself. Understand this as best you can! (*Diary*, 17.7.52).

... the submersion of the self in the Self. The great mistake is surely to wait for the submersion. The goal is neither the submersion nor an eternal life. There is no goal to attain, there is only an eye to open — rather, not to open, still less to close, or even to gaze — the gaze is just there, eternal, timeless, spaccless, the gaze, the love, the bliss, the divine *shānti* which is in and through me.... it is merely to be no longer diverted from the Real (*Diary*, 19.7.52).

The '*sahaja*' is not something to be produced in myself. It is just there. It is only a matter of discovering it, or recognizing it, of finding the way to it, clogged as it is with stones, thorns, so many '*vāsanās*' since the time of my birth (*Diary*, 22.3.53).

Advaita is neither a doctrine nor a system. It is the supreme experience here below, one which forbids giving an absolute meaning to the form of multiplicity which marks everything in the world that comes before our senses or our mind.... Advaita is the fundamental dimension of being (*Diary*, 30.3.64).

The *jnāni* neither realizes nor discovers anything that is new. He simply sees reality in all its splendour. He penetrates to the essence of things and there discovers Yahweh-Brahman (*Diary*, 12.11.66).

The teaching of advaita is not a matter of negation — no rites, no dogmas, etc.; it is the blazing discovery of a secret, of an interior level. The level into which Jesus entered (at his Baptism?) and remained there (*Diary*, 21.12.71).

In chapter 3 of his book *Saccidānanda*, Swami Abhishiktananda gave a clear and forceful account of Sri Ramana's teaching, for example:

It is the worst possible illusion to imagine that we have to struggle to find liberation or *mukti*, or to experience the Self, which is the same thing.... To strive consciously and deliberately to arrive at this 'realization of the self' is paradoxically the greatest obstacle in the way of reaching it; for it involves the assumption that man's natural state — the *sahaja sthiti*, as he called it — is something that man does not yet possess — as if a man could *be* without being himself!... This method leaves no place for subconscious transference or for the inflation of the ego. It is through and through a method of relaxation, of detachment, of flight towards what is inward and authentic.... It cuts at the root of any self-satisfaction and so achieves the most radical purification.⁷

Some of Abhishiktananda's references to Sri Ramana, showing how he revered him as a supreme advaitin and grasped

7. *Saccidānanda: A Christian Approach to Advaitic Experience*, Delhi, ISPCCK, 1974, p. 37.

the Maharshi's own explanation of his role as a guru, may be quoted:

Ramana is not a *brahmavid*; there is no other *brahmavid* than Brahman. Brahman knows *himself* in his Ramana-murti. Ramana is Brahman's own pure consciousness of himself. There is nothing left in Ramana which could congratulate itself or delight in knowing Brahman or in the fact that Brahman knows himself in him, Ramana. There is only pure *Cit* in itself, *citsvarūpa*, pure *Ananda* in itself, *svatūpānanda*, *ānandamaya*, because he is nothing but pure *Śat*, *saṁmātra*. The mental and physical functions of Ramana are pure Brahman-shakti, pure radiance of the self-awareness in himself of Brahman as Ramana-murti. There is nothing in them to deflect them from their essential object... the essential object of the divine cosmic sport which also is nothing other than Brahman, if one may so express it... The *shakti* of the *five* *mukta* is the very power of Brahman at work in the world (*Diary*, 23.11.56).

The true guru, precisely because he has 'realized', is able to penetrate the soul of his disciple. The whispering of the sacred mantra in the disciple's ear on the day of his initiation is the symbol of a mysterious and effective whisper from heart to heart. The disciple is united to God through his guru. Not that the guru would be an intermediary between the disciple and God. It is in the person of the guru that God appears to the disciple. The guru is for him an authentic revelation of God; so the only true guru is he who has 'realized' (*Diary*, 3.4.52).

Books and guru can only point the way. It is for the Self to find the way to the Self. The intellect can merely give assistance; it is not able to open the door. It makes preparations, but only the Self opens the door of the Self. Lightning, thunder...! (*Diary*, 17.7.52).

Why trouble about a guru? about Ramana? about Arunāchala? *Tu tvam asi*! The guru, Ramana, Arunāchala, and the rest, they are the outward projection of the Self, who hides himself in order to be found (*Diary*, 26.4.64).

My deepest ideal — that to which unconsciously everything in me is referred — is that of Ramana, who is such a perfect example of Vedānta; and this ideal of Ramana could never have rooted itself at this depth in my psyche if there had not been a meeting with an obscurely felt call, a 'surfacing', an awakening (*Diary*, 2.7.71).

Finally, it will be of interest to note another very important aspect of the advaita which Abhishiktanandaji lived as a consequence of his 'initiation' by Sri Ramana and Arunāchala. He once described himself in his *Diary* as "at once so deeply Christian and so deeply Hindu, at a depth where Christian and Hindu in their social and mental structures are blown to pieces, and are yet found again ineffably at the heart of each other" (*Diary*, 30.6.64). In his *Diary* he often writes, 'we Hindus...'; yet he was, and remained to the end of his life, a Christian and a Christian priest with a profound sense of responsibility towards his Christian brethren. He could say without qualification: "The experience of the Upanishads is true, *I know it is*" (*Diary*, 11.5.72); yet equally he would never deny the truth of his Christian — of Christ's — experience. At the same time he realized very clearly that on any

level except the deepest, and most certainly at the level of the intellect, these 'truths' are distinct and are not wholly compatible. But there cannot be more than one Truth, and he continued to live with his Christian and his Hindu experience, refusing any easy identification or re-interpretation of one in terms of the other (as for instance is offered by some popular forms of neo-Vedānta), convinced that in their source they are not—two.

It is impossible briefly to set out Abhishiktananda's insight into the Christian experience — that must await fuller publication of his writings, especially of the *Diary*. However he would have said that he owed to Sri Ramana two things in particular: (a) an advaitic purification of his Christian faith, and (b) a deeper entry into the Christian mystery.

(a) It has already been noted that as a result of his first darshan of the Maharshi he recognized something that did not fit into, and indeed 'shattered' his 'previous mental structures', i.e., the formulation which till then he had accepted of Christian theology. But this did not involve the abandonment of these deeply valued 'structures'. Rather he came to see (often painfully, because he was ahead of his time) that no formulation or structure can be given an absolute value. They always have the nature of 'signs' and are inevitably limited and culturally conditioned; their value comes from the authentic experience out of which they issue, and their function is to point to what is Beyond.

Because Abhishiktananda gave full value to his Hindu and to his Christian experience, he was in a position to grasp the fact that the advaitic 'purification' applies to every attempt at formulation, including that of advaitic philosophy itself.

Advaita is not a doctrine, it is an experience. But the advaitin theologians are just as intolerable and ineffectual as the Christian, Muslim or Buddhist theologians, who determine the truth simply by deduction from syllogisms and flat assertions. As if truth could be attained by the intellect otherwise than by using symbols — and the symbol never exhausts reality (*Diary*, 29.11.56).

Advaita is not the idea that God and the creature are ONE. That is without meaning at any level whatever. As soon as there is an idea, the principle of contradiction comes into play. God and creature are correlative terms. . . . Advaita is neither a sacred nor a religious nor a supernatural nor a divine experience, because all these qualifications imply duality. It is an experience that overarches all. It is not even the supreme state of consciousness, because supreme implies comparison. It is, quite simply, beyond all categories (*Diary*, 30.11.71).

Advaita is not an intellectual discovery, but a deep-seated attitude of the spirit. It is far more the impossibility of saying 'Two' than the affirmation

of 'One'. What is the use of saying 'One' in one's thought, if one says 'Two' in one's life? Not to say 'Two' in one's life, that is love (*Diary*, 15.4.64).

Christianity, Vedānta, are they not in the end two points of view from which man seeks to understand the mystery of God? Two irreconcilable perspectives — but is not God precisely the meeting point of opposites (*coincidentia oppositorum*)? (*Diary*, 16.5.58).

(b) A few extracts may now be given which hint at the deepening of Abhishiktananda's entry into the Christian mystery:

Ramana's ashram helps me to understand the Gospel (*Diary*, 4.12.53).

There is one fact which overrides all: the religious experience which I have had in a non-Christian environment with an intensity never known in my previous life, and in real continuity with all that I had obscurely felt hitherto. Ramana's advaita is my birthplace, *mālagarbha*. Faced with that, all reasonings are shattered (*Diary*, 3.9.55).

There is much more in the Gospel than Christian piety has ever discovered. So what is to be done? One thing only. If the Christian mystery is true, it will be found again 'intact' beyond the advaitin experience (*Diary*, 18.4.56).

The essential task is the absolute 'surrender' of the peripheral 'I' to the inner Mystery (*Diary*, 3.2.56).

Part of Abhishiktananda's discovery was undoubtedly to realize more clearly the advaitin 'dimension' in Christian experience. He tirelessly drew attention to this in his writings for Christians, calling for a real recovery of contemplative prayer and exposing the shallowness of popular 'dualistic' forms of Christianity. And it was no small consolation to him that a number of Christians wrote to tell him that his books had helped them *for the first time* to understand their own experience.

The last thing that meditation is, is a 'face-to-face' with God. 'Face-to-face' implies at least something on each side which would be the same, which could be added together and make two. But there is nothing between God and man which could be numbered. I do not say that God is man, or that man is God; I simply deny that man plus God makes two (*Diary*, 5.7.56).

But if advaita is the experience that God and man are 'not two', and if we resist the temptation to rationalize this into the 'idea' that God and man are therefore 'one', there remains at the heart of advaita a mystery of relation. This is of course an essential aspect of the Christian experience, and indeed of all experience:

Man has constantly and at all times oscillated between these two poles of the apprehension of the Absolute: the Other — and the true 'I' of my I (*le Moi de moi*), the Self of the self. There is no advaitin who some day or other does not say THOU to God; and there is no sociological religion, however dualistic, in which one or other of its followers does not cry out like Al-Hallaj: 'Remove this Thou which is between Thee and me!' (*Diary*, 9.2.56).

The act of God and myself is absolutely non-dual. . . . It is then that in the depth of this advaita itself arises the dawn of the Christian faith, the gaze of the Father and the Son in the non-duality of the Spirit (*Diary*, 28.3.64).

Christ is the revelation of what I am. Christ, Son of the Father, the pleromatic [total] Christ, who extends to all times and to every being, is the mirror in whom I discover myself (*Diary*, 9.2.65).

Jesus is the Sadguru. For that reason he leads beyond his form. He constantly points to the Father. . . . The Father is greater, which means deeper, more primordial, more original. And in his 'form' Jesus has to disappear, so that the Spirit may come (*Diary*, 23.3.70).

The depth of the Spirit is the very mystery of Christ, the place of the essential meeting, the essential Presence. Christ is essentially man's awakening to his origin from the Father, man's entry into the greatest depth of the self, beyond his own depth, his own self (*Diary*, 22.12.54).

. . . the Father's heart, the original darkness, the abyss which man finds when once he plumbs the mystery of his being, whether by turning back into the past in terms of time, or by plunging into the depths of his consciousness at the existential level. The original abyss discovered by the Seers. . . . The Father is the mystery of my origin, and the Spirit is the mystery of my relation to my origin (*Diary*, 5.6.55).

Jesus, the revelation of the face-to-face in the depth of the advaita of the Spirit (*Diary*, 26.6.69).

Advaita in Christianity means to have as my 'face' (personality) only the person of Christ, and as my being only the depth of the Father's love, and to discover myself again in this totally free gift of love (*Diary*, 30.3.64).

The Gospel gives the face of God, the Upanishad the mystery, or rather, the immediacy of this mystery. There is no doubt that no other divine figure adored by men is as pure as is that of Jesus. . . . Jesus is the Face of God towards men and the face of man towards God. The *purusha* of the Upanishads is the non-dual interiority of man and God (*Diary*, 28.12.71).

Some of the above extracts call for further explanation, but this is not the place for that. A close friend and disciple of Abhishiktananda wrote of him shortly after his death:

His spiritual path essentially consisted in the complete appropriation of the advaitic experience of the Upanishadic rishis, without however losing hold of his own rootedness in the Christian tradition. . . . He never ceased to contemplate the Mystery — at once the Mystery which has a Face, even as the Gospel presents it to us in the person of Jesus; and at the same time, the Mystery that has no face, as it was revealed in the heart of India's rishis. For him there was but one single and unique act of contemplation, centred unfailingly on the non-dual experience of the absolute and unique *aham asmi*, pregnant with the resonance of the 'I AM' of Yahweh which Jesus pronounced in his own name. That *Aham* is the mystery realized by Swamiji, the essence of his illumination.⁸

The severe heart-attack in July 1973, from which Swami Abhishiktananda nearly died on the spot, was an experience of intense realization. "In seeing myself so weak, so incapable of thought, of movement, I was freed from being identified with this *I* which had

Continued on p. 167

8. ABHISHIKTANANDA, *The Further Shore*, Delhi, ISPCK, 1975, pp. ix-x.

A Prophet Disowned

*Swami Upadhyaya Brahmabandhav**

C. FONSECA, S.J.

UPADHYAYA Brahmabandhav was born Bhavani Charan Banerjee on February 11th 1861 in the remote village of Khanyan, 36 miles due north of Calcutta in an orthodox Bengalee Brahmin family. The family came under the influence of the reform movement in Bengal and had a strong affinity for Christianity. His uncle, Kalicharan Banerjee was a protestant minister and his father had leanings towards Catholicism. He was brought up in a traditional Hindu household and his English education in several protestant schools in Calcutta was supplemented by an exposure to Sanskrit lore and learning at a pathshala in Bhatpur.

In his boyhood, he was characterized by physical, moral and intellectual vigour. He topped his class, played a good game of cricket and foot-ball and was the terror of the local bullies. His youth culminated in two juvenile escapades in which, caught up in the growing nationalist sentiments of his time, he endeavoured to enlist in the armed forces of a native state, to liberate his country from political subjection. He returned home disillusioned. He was compelled in 1880 to give up his post as a teacher after a bout of illness. He sought to recuperate his health by a visit to the holy places on the Himalayas. The mystique of the mountains worked a spiritual transformation in him and he returned a mature young man with his juvenile fantasies behind him.

In 1882 he was back in Calcutta, a teacher at the Free Church Institution. It was these years which gave a new direction to his life. He came into contact with most of the leading lights of the Bengal renaissance, Vivekananda, Keshub Chandra Sen, Priya Nath Mullick, Ramakrishna Pramahansa and P. C. Mozumdar. But it was to Keshub Chandra Sen that he was most powerfully drawn. He was formally initiated into the New Dispensation Church of Keshub Chandra on the 6th of January 1887, as a Brahmo missionary. At

*This paper was read as Inaugural Lecture at the beginning of the academic year of Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune, in June 1979.

the invitation of a fellow Brahmo student, Sadhu Hiranand, a Sindhi, Bhavani left for Sind the following year to help in the founding of a school at Hyderabad.

Spiritual Odyssey

Bhavani arrived in Sind, bringing with him more than an ability to teach. He was pervaded with what Sibnath Shastri describes in his *History of the Brahmo Samaj* as that "Christian sentiment, namely, an enthusiasm for saving fellow-sinners by carrying to them the new gospel".¹ Bhavani's enthusiasm was infectious. He gathered an increasing number of followers around him. He delivered lectures in the Brahmo Samaj, won admiration by his knowledge of Sanskrit literature and, in general, played the part of a Brahmo missionary. This was 1888. In the course of the same year, he was to undergo an experience which proved to be the turning point of his life. While nursing his father in Multan during an illness from which he never recovered, Bhavani chanced upon a copy of Bruno's *Catholic Belief* — a popular exposition of the faith — from his father's library. It was an experience similar to that of Debendranath Tagore, when a scrap of paper containing a puranic verse was blown by the wind to lodge against his foot and the reading of which turned him to religion; or nearer still, like the "tolle, lege" of St Augustine. From boyhood, Bhavani had grown up with a personal attachment to Christ, a feeling no doubt fostered by his Christian uncle and the Protestant schools he had attended; and still more by Keshub Chandra's lyrical effusions on the person of Christ. Now his mind was in a ferment. It took him all through the years 1889 and 1890 amidst his various activities, to give final shape to his conflicting thoughts. At the end of 1890 at a meeting of Protestants in Calcutta, he said: "I am longing to be engrafted on the vine of which you are already the branches and the body of which you are members."² Rejecting the Church of England, in which he was baptized on the 26th of February, 1891, he entered the Catholic Church on September 1st, 1891. He took the name, Theophilus.

But Bhavani remained true to his vocation of a missionary, only his allegiance was transferred from Brahmoism to Catholic Christianity. "Ever since I became a Catholic", he used to say, "my one object has been to bring India to the Faith."³ Accordingly, he delivered lectures and held prayer meetings in Karachi and Hyderabad

1. Sibnath SASTRI, *History of the Brahma Samaj*, I, p. 133, quoted in Sisir Kumar DAS, *The Shadow of the Cross*, p. 97.

2. B. ANIMANANDA, *The Blade*, p. 43.

3. *The Blade*, p. 50.

in the style of a Brahmo minister. His friends, Parmanand and Khemchand, soon joined him and were baptized. In the tradition-bound and strait-laced Latin Christianity of North India, he was an odd figure. An evangelical free-booter, he fitted in nowhere. He won the sympathy of some; others tolerated him, and not a few viewed him with suspicion and distrust. Always a man of action, he needed the discipline of journalism to give shape and substance to his thoughts and wider diffusion to his ideas. In 1894 he founded the *Sophia*, a monthly Catholic journal at Karachi, after he had wrung grudging permission for its publication from the Superior Regular of the Jesuits, Fr Jurgens. It continued publication from January 1894 till March 1899, when it was suppressed by ecclesiastical authority in circumstances that can only be described as tragic. The *Sophia* was both the vehicle of his thoughts and ideas and the record of his intellectual development. In it can be traced his pursuit of his ideal — the conversion of India. Writing in October 1894, under the title, "Conversion of India — An Appeal", he says: "Theism is the preamble of faith and it will be unwise to attempt to build up the structure of the supernatural religion of Christ before the solid foundation of Theism is properly laid."⁴ He called, therefore, for a "deadly warfare" against the Arya Samaj, the Brahmos and Theosophy which had led the Hindus astray. While the *Sophia* continued publication, he was everywhere, in Lahore, Amritsar, Karachi, Bombay, Madras, and Trichinopoly, lecturing and arguing in defence of his new-found faith with Pauline zeal and perseverance. In December 1894, he published in the pages of *Sophia* a "Declaration": "I have adopted the life of Bhikshu (mendicant) Sannyasi. . . my new name is Upadhyaya Brahma-bandhu."⁵ Arrayed in the saffron robe of the Indian Sannyasi for which he was expelled from the Church in Hyderabad, he took to wearing a large ebony cross suspended from his neck to set at rest the suspicion of his fellow-Catholics and to re-assure the Archbishop of Bombay, whose permission for free access to the Churches of his archdiocese he had obtained with some difficulty.

With his identity as a Catholic Sannyasi now assured, he entered the lists against the presiding religious sects in India on behalf of the faith he had embraced. He condemned the potter God of the Arya Samaj, which taught the eternity of matter; the changing God of the Brahmos, which evolved into the non-ego; the zero God of the Theosophists, which had no existence. He attacked the Brahmo editor of *Unity and Minister* "for his extreme virulence against Christianity";⁶

4. *Sophia*, October 1894, p. 16.

5. *Sophia*, December 1894, p. 1.

6. *Sophia*, September 1895, p. 11.

the Arya Samaj for denying the religious belief that "the state of salvation is everlasting";⁷ and challenged Mrs Besant to open debate. In his eyes, *Sophia* was "an honoured instrument in carrying out his (Christ's) glorious work of the conversion of India".⁸

By 1896, he realized that his attitude of sustained antagonism to the non-Christian religions would not produce the results he anticipated. His approach became more positive and turned increasingly so over the years. In January, 1896, he proclaimed a "new programme" for *Sophia*: it included "to baptise the truths of Hindu philosophy and build them up as stepping stones to the Catholic Faith".⁹ The idea took a whole year to mature. In February 1897, he appealed to the Bishops of India to take note of a "great crisis in the history of India".

Who... will save India at this juncture?... The Catholic Church alone.... A score of learned and zealous missionaries, holy men of ascetic habits, and a metaphysical turn of mind issuing from a common centre of operations established in India, subject to a common central authority, travelling all over India, giving lectures and holding public disputations with pundits can, we feel sure, transform the face of educated India within a few years.... We appeal to the noble dignitaries of the Church to give this matter their serious consideration.¹⁰

In July 1897, he returned to the subject of the relation between Christianity and Hindu philosophy:

We have no definite idea as regards the *modus operandi* of making Hindu philosophy the handmaid of Christianity. The task is difficult and beset with many dangers. But we have a conviction, and it is growing day by day, that the Catholic Church will find it hard to conquer India unless she makes Hindu philosophy hew wood and draw water for her.¹¹

In December 1897, Upadhyaya left Bombay for Calcutta which he now made his permanent home. The Sadharan Samaj, a dissident group of the Brahmo Samaj, invited him to address its young men. He lectured on Vedanta, on the doctrine of Karma and Brahmoism, in his usual critical style, but the crowds gathered around him and visitors flocked to converse with and consult him. The *Sophia* now shifted its offices to Calcutta with Animananda, later the author of his biography, *The Blade*, as its manager. The May number of *Sophia* carried an article under the heading, "A Catholic Monastery in India". The tone of the article is subdued and tentative. "The scheme has

7. *Sophia*, October 1895, p. 3.

8. *Sophia*, January 1896, p. 1.

9. *Sophia*, January 1896, p. 5.

10. *Sophia*, February 1897, pp. 11-12.

11. *Sophia*, July 1897, pp. 8-9.

not yet been elaborated";¹² but Upadhyaya outlines its object and its main features. He writes:

Monastic life is exceedingly congenial to the soil of India. In this age of materialism when contemplative life is despised, India is still dotted over with monasteries. . . . This natural asceticism, if elevated to the supernatural order, will bear luxuriant fruit. . . . The ancient land of the Aryans is to be won over to Catholic faith and who can achieve the conquest but Hindu Catholic Sannyasis inspired with the spirit of the ancient monks ?¹³

The idea of an Indian monasticism met with immediate favourable comment from several quarters. Upadhyaya reports that "a prelate, well known for his missionary zeal, has been gracious enough to offer his apostolic protection and patronage to the monastery"; that a high circle of ecclesiastics and laymen have welcomed the idea with enthusiasm; that a European gentleman has selected a site for the monastery and promised cooperation in finding ways and means to secure it. An appreciative leader in the *Catholic Watchman* of Madras, obviously under clerical editorship, given the times, has favoured the scheme, but raised the first warning note that its practical execution "must be necessarily involved in great difficulties".¹⁴ The *Jaffna Guardian*, quoted in the August number of *Sophia*, commented: "Upadhyaya Brahmapandya is so full of the love of souls that he now aims at "carrying the torch of Catholic faith to the darkest nooks and corners of India !" But it could not refrain from expressing its doubts on its acceptability to ecclesiastical authority.¹⁵ These prognostications proved only too true in the event.

In his article on "A Catholic Monastery in India" Upadhyaya had mentioned Hindu Catholic Sannyasis as the only agents who could achieve the conquest of India for the Catholic faith. The expression Hindu Catholic was not a peripheral reference, but contained in seed a concept that when developed would throw light on a line of thought central to his whole life and character. This he did in another article, "Are we Hindus ?"¹⁶

By birth we are Hindu, he explains, "and shall remain Hindu till death. But as dvija (twice born), by virtue of our sacramental rebirth, we are Catholic. . . . The more strictly do we practise our universal faith, the better do we grow as Hindus. . . . Do we believe in Hinduism ? The question must be understood before it can be answered. Hinduism has no definite creed. . . . The test of being a Hindu cannot, therefore, lie in religious opinions. . . . We are Hindus so far as our physical and mental constitution is concerned, but in regard to our immortal souls, we are Catholic. We are *Hindu Catholic*.¹⁷

12. *Sophia*, May 1898, p. 79.

13. *Sophia*, May 1898, pp. 78-79.

14. *Sophia*, July 1898, pp. 107-108.

15. *Sophia*, August 1898, pp. 125-126.

16. *Sophia*, July 1898, pp. 101-102.

17. *Sophia*, July 1898, pp. 101-102.

Early 1899 saw the foundation of the eagerly awaited Catholic Math at Jubbulpore under the aegis of the then Bishop of Nagpur, Mgr Pelvat. There were three monks, Upadhyaya, Animananda and another. They prayed, fasted, studied, and begged for their support in the streets of Jubbulpore. During the Lent of that year, Upadhyaya retired to a hill where he lived in solitude, in prayer and severe asceticism.

In October 1898, Fr A. Hegglin who had befriended Upadhyaya in Hyderabad had recorded in his diary that "Upadhyaya's daring, independent procedure caused anxiety to his superiors."¹⁸ This anxiety had already translated itself into action by a letter of Mgr Zaleski expressing his opposition to the project on June 17th 1898 — a stand which received approbation from Rome three months later (September 13th, 1898).

The monastery was closed and the inmates dispersed; Upadhyaya and Animananda retired to Calcutta to continue the publication of *Sophia*. But Upadhyaya carried away with him from his hours of solitary meditation on the banks of the Narmada a new identity, that of a Catholic Vedantist. From being an intransigent and uncompromising opponent of the Vedantism of the Brahmos and of Vivekananda, he stood forth as the champion of a Vedanta that "was a purer form of theism than that even of Aristotle". He came to realize that the central problem of the Vedantists — the relation of the Absolute and the world — could be resolved only in a Christian sense. "Maya", he wrote, "is what St Thomas calls 'creatio passiva' — passive creation. It is a quality of all that is not Brahman and is defined by the Angelic Doctor as 'the habitude of having being from another and resulting from the operation of God'."¹⁹ "Maya is more expressive of the doctrine of creation than the Latin root *creare*."²⁰ So much for Upadhyaya's Maya.

The first number of the Weekly *Sophia* (as distinguished from its predecessor, the Monthly) appeared on June 16th 1900. It proclaimed itself to be a review of politics, sociology, literature and comparative theology. In September 1900, Mgr Zaleski wrote to the Vicar General of Calcutta, Fr V. Marchal, complaining of the tone of the review and asking him to make Upadhyaya resign. Upadhyaya did so. But the Apostolic Delegate struck again. This time a mortal blow. *Sophia's* largest readership was among the Catholics of the then Madras Presidency, especially the new converts. In a letter to the Archbishop

18. B. ANIMANANDA, *The Blade*, p. 80.

19. *Sophia*, 1899, "The True Doctrine of Maya".

20. Weekly *Sophia*, September 29th, 1900, "Vedanta and Christianity".

of Madras, Zaleski warned the Catholics of his delegation "against associating with and reading the said periodical *Sophia*".²¹

The unfortunate incident is best told in Upadhyaya's own words. In a fly-leaf addressed, with his usual delicacy of feeling, "For Catholic Readers Only", he writes: "A little over a month ago the Catholic community of India were startled by the publication of a paragraph followed by a letter over the signature of His Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate, denouncing *Sophia* of all other papers in the world." Upadhyaya bowed to authority and stopped publication in December 1900.

But journalism was his passion. In 1901, he launched the *Twentieth Century*, a journal that "will discuss and agitate all questions involving the welfare of India. It will infuse public spirit into the Catholic body and bring us into touch with our countrymen."²² Mgr Zaleski was in Rome when his attention was drawn to this new journalistic venture of Upadhyaya. In a letter given at Rome, outside the Flaminian Gate, dated 20th June 1901, he forbade Catholics residing in the limits of his Delegation "to read, to subscribe to, and have any connection with the above said monthly review."²³ In a letter to the *Bombay Examiner*, Upadhyaya challenged the action of the Delegate and clarified his position: "My writings in *Sophia* have never been found to contain errors by the ecclesiastical authorities. I have never shown any inclination not to submit my writings to ecclesiastical judgment. I am not alone. There are high-placed ecclesiastics who are on my side." But all to no avail. Zaleski was adamant.

Catholic though he was, and of impeccable credentials, inspite of his conflicts with Church authorities, Upadhyaya remained at heart the 19th century Bengali reformer he was, in the tradition of Ram Mohan Roy, Vivekananda and Keshub Chandra Sen. A voyage to England was integral to their intellectual development. Contact with England and English thought seemed necessary to round off their western-oriented education. Upadhyaya embarked for Genoa on the 5th October, 1901, leaving to the care of Animananda his school, the Saraswat Ayatan, he had recently founded. Rome overwhelmed him when he arrived there on November 1st, 1901. In England, he was in demand as a lecturer at Oxford and Cambridge. But Western civilization, contrary to the expectations of his friends in India, who thought that "contact with Europeans would sober him down in his denunciation of Western culture",²⁴ repelled him by its materialism.

21. B. ANIMANANDA, *The Blade*, p. 91.

22. *The Blade*, p. 98.

23. *The Blade*, p. 103.

24. *The Blade*, p. 118.

He was back in Calcutta in August 1903, convinced that "India should not give up her ancient wisdom and her hoary, time-tried social institutions".²⁵ His views underwent a sea-change. His nationalism surfaced and became the driving force of his life. He became the editor and publisher in Calcutta of the *Sandhya*, a virulently nationalist daily. He moved closer to the political circles of his time. The paper was published in Bengalee and both its contents and language preserved it from the interference of ecclesiastical authorities. But the style and policies it pursued — a sustained attack on the British government — drew down upon it the resentment and animosity of the Bengal government which initiated repressive measures against it.

Freed from ecclesiastical control upon his activities, Upadhyaya now sought to put into practice, in his own life, his cherished vision of what an Indian Catholic should be — in custom and manners, in observing caste and social distinctions, "genuine Hindus, but in their immortal souls, Catholics". The experiments, bold and innovative, led to serious doubts amongst his Christian friends as to whether he had not abandoned his faith. Animananda, his earliest and most faithful companion, felt it his duty to sever connections with him after the Saraswati puja which was performed in the school they conducted in Simla street. In July 1904, he delivered a lecture on 'Sree Krishna' in refutation of an attack on the personality of Krishna, by the Rev. J. N. Farquhar. "There is a vast difference between Christ and Krishna", he admitted in his lecture; nevertheless, his Catholic friends were not satisfied and his lyrical description of Shree Krishna's life and teachings seemed to confirm their worst fears. Upadhyaya remained impervious to criticism. A few months before his death, he underwent at his own request the Hindu rite of Prayaschitta. "This is the consummation of your Vedanta", exclaimed a friend.²⁶ Upadhyaya defended the legitimacy of his action. In the August number of the *Twentieth Century* he had written: "Society cannot arrogate to itself the power of removing moral defilements, but it has every right to punish social defilements." The social defilement from which Upadhyaya sought purification was his recent voyage abroad and his inter-dining with foreigners which was prohibited by Hindu law-givers.

Under the influence of this new attitude, Upadhyaya's religious practice showed, at least externally, a marked diminution, though Miss Agnes Khemchand, the last surviving member of his intimate associates, states in a letter that "he was known to slip off to Serampore to hear mass"²⁷ and fulfil his obligations. His political activities

25. *The Blade*, p. 119.

26. *The Blade*, p. 159.

27. Letter of Miss Agnes Khemchnad.

seemed to require this suppression of his Christian identity in public, though whether this was warranted or not, is arguable.

On September 10th, 1907, the Government decided to strike. Upadhyaya, with his printer Sarada Charan Sen, and the manager of the *Sandhya* office were taken into custody. Bail was granted, but they had to attend court, day after day. Long hours in the dock told on his physical condition and aggravated an incipient attack of hernia. An operation seemed imperative. In the Campbell Hospital in Calcutta, as an under-trial prisoner and hence under police surveillance, he underwent the operation successfully. But three days later, in circumstances that seem dubious, though not necessarily so, he succumbed to an infection showing all the apparent symptoms of tetanus. He died on Sunday, 27th October 1907, in his 47th year. The end was sudden and unexpected. Fr Berghmans, his parish-priest, hurried to the death-bed to claim the body, but was refused his request. Upadhyaya had not made any entry in the hospital register under the heading religion, as that was, he affirmed, no concern of anybody but himself. His death was regarded as a providential release, since some of his friends feared as Miss Agnes Khemchand states, that "he would have been hanged as an extremist, or, at least, given a life-term."⁸

The funeral procession was more a triumphant march accorded to a national hero than the lonely and hurried cremation it might ordinarily have been. Yet the enthusiasm was short-lived. The ashes were consigned to the river and the broad stream of the Ganges carried them away into oblivion; forgotten not only by his countrymen, but even by his co-religionists. The Catholic Church in India did not even record the event, if she was aware of it at all; and ignored, with an indifference she could ill-afford, the passing away of one of the greatest and most devoted of her sons in recent times.

Jesus Son of God

Upadhyaya has left us no apologia. The spiritual odyssey of so unique a convert who made his own way into the Church from a background deeply coloured by the dominant Hindu sectarianism of his day, cannot but find a place in any effort to understand his mind and character. Perhaps it is an attribute of his unobtrusive and selfless nature, that he never, inspite of being constantly engaged in polemics of one form or another, felt it necessary to lay bare his soul to his readers. But he has left behind numerous clues which when viewed together present, to a quite marked degree, an accurate picture of his

28. Ibid.

mind as it passed from a reverence of and devotion to the Christ of the liberals to a whole-hearted acceptance of the Christ of the Gospels.

It will be recalled that the young Upadhyaya had fallen under the spell of Keshub Chandra. One can imagine the impact on his mind as the master poured out, in burning eloquence, his singular devotion to the person of Christ: "Christ, my sweet Christ, the brightest jewel of my heart, the necklace of my soul, for twenty years have I cherished him in this miserable heart. Though often defiled and persecuted by the world, I have found sweetness and joy unutterable in my master Jesus."²⁹ "Who rules India? Not politics or diplomacy, but Christ. None but Jesus ever deserved this bright precious diadem — India. And Jesus shall have it."³⁰

Upadhyaya, four years after his conversion, recalled these words and asked himself:

Why did not Keshub Chandra Sen accept Christ as the eternal Son of God?... Was it not he who checked the tide of the conversion of educated India to Christianity.... He considered Christ to be 'the culmination of humanity', 'the last manifestation of Divinity', 'an example of true sonship' and 'perfect self-surrender'. Therefore he calls him the Son of God, even the only-begotten Son, but not because he believed Christ to be an eternal person in the bosom of the Godhead.... The eternal distinction of Persons in the one same Godhead... (was) to Keshub either a verbal quibble or polytheism.... Let us now see what was the real cause which made the mind of Keshub... wholly impervious to the Christian doctrine of his eternal Personality. To our mind the principle cause was that he was not aware of the supernatural destiny of man as taught by the Catholic Church. He knew what was the Protestant doctrine of supernatural life...; he saw very little difference between his idea of natural life and the Protestant idea of supernatural life. He had no conception of the supernatural except in the sense of its being anti-natural, unreasonable and superstitious.³¹

Two years later, he takes up the same thought and enlarges upon it. He states that the Brahmas, under the influence of Christian theism, rejected the Vedantic idea of the absolute God and affirmed that creation was "a *derived and contingent* existence". But their protestant spirit has led them to the other extreme that "God is not self-sufficient, that actual, finite existence is a necessary correlative to the Infinite.... If they had stuck to Christian theism...., they would have seen the wonderful fitness of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity...."³²

29. Quoted in R. DE SMET, "Hindu Philosophy in English", *International Philosophical Quarterly*, March 1968, p. 12.

30. Quoted in V. S. NARAYANE, *Modern Indian Thought*, p. 43.

31. *Sophia*, February 1895, pp. 14-15.

32. *Sophia*, August 1897, p. 9.

Could it be that these reflections mirror the movements of his mind as he reflected on the new doctrines that he discovered in Bruno's *Catholic Belief* which started him off in quest of the truth? Did Bruno carry him beyond Keshub Chandra and the Brahmos, beyond the Unitarian influences he would surely have imbibed from his contact with them, and reveal to him the world of the supernatural and the Triune God, the goal of the Vedantic *Brahmajñyasa* — the desire to know God as he is; the mysterious *Sat-Cit-Ananda* of the ancient rishis? There seems to be a confirmation of this. The enlightenment that the first moments of his conversion brought him remained to dominate his thoughts and found expression in the magnificent canticle, *Vande Saccidānandam*,³³ now sung in our Churches. It remains the only tribute of recognition which — belatedly — the Church in India has paid to one of her noblest sons.

Hindu and Catholic

Upadhyaya was the last of the Bengal Reformers who grappled with the problem of tradition and change which was the central concern of the religious, social and political movement that began with Ram Mohan Roy. Under the Moghuls, Hinduism easily moved into an acceptance of the monotheism of the Sufis but with the arrival of the British and with them, the aggressive protestant missionaries, the Baptists and the Unitarians, they saw that their traditional religious positions were subjected to a grave intellectual assault. The continuity of their traditions had to be maintained against the danger of its ultimate disintegration. On the other hand, the new social and political policy that the new rulers had introduced forced its acceptance upon them by a rationality which appeared to them to be unanswerable. Each reformer wrestled with this problem in his own mind and proposed a solution which his contemporary or successor either rejected or sought to improve upon. The catalyst of this intellectual ferment was the magnetic person of Christ, the lode-star, to whose attraction they reacted in their various ways. As Sisir Kumar Das says: Since Ram Mohan Roy "all religious movements in Bengal became related directly or indirectly to the Christian challenge."³⁴ It can be claimed for Upadhyaya that, having inherited this problem from his intellectual forbears, he was the first to resolve the dichotomy between Hinduism and Christianity which had so exercised the minds of his predecessors and had defied a solution at their hands.

The problem existed at two levels, philosophical and religious, and the Serampore missionaries based their objections on both grounds.

33. *Sophia*, October 1898, p. 145.

34. Sisir Kumar Das, *The Shadow of the Cross*, p. 40.

"What puzzled them most was the apparent absence of any metaphysical basis for Good and Evil. The doctrine of *maya*, they thought, denies the very reality of the world and leaves no room for ethics."³⁵ From Ram Mohan Roy to Pratap Chandra Mozumdar the whole succession of reformers for almost a century took up the challenge and attempted a defense which varied according to their individual predilections. Their attitude to Christianity remained ambivalent, for there remained an insoluble conflict between their respect for Christ and attachment to their national tradition and social practices. The strategy evolved was to avoid all metaphysical involvement. Ram Mohan's ethical Christ was isolated from all claims to divinity, hence also from the Incarnation and the Trinity. He attempted, in reality, to found "a non-Christian Christianity".³⁶ He favoured by preference "moral doctrines, tending...to the maintenance of the peace and harmony of mankind at large" and "beyond the reach of metaphysical perversion".³⁷ Debendranath Tagore rejected Advaita and his Western-oriented theism ended in mysticism. Keshub Chandra who inherited the mantle of Debendranath moved closest to Christianity. Less rationalist than Ram Mohan Roy, he sought a synthesis of all religions "in a fundamental intuition of God or a God-vision".³⁸ The "polished abstraction of modern metaphysics" found no place in his philosophy.³⁹

Unlike his mentor Keshub Chandra, Upadhyaya approached the problem from a Christian stance and successfully reconciled Christ with Hinduism. His doctrine of *maya* led man "to his true goal, creating him, as it were, in himself outside God, but preventing him all the time from resting anywhere except at the feet of God".⁴⁰ His distinction between Samaj and Sadhana Dharma allowed him to affirm: "We are Hindu Catholics."

Faithful under Trial...

The high-light of Upadhyaya's life, the reason for which he is most remembered, is not so much his successes as the final failure of the career he had charted out for himself. It began with the closure of his Jubbulpore monastery, followed, in succession, by the suppression of the monthly and the weekly *Sophia*, and finally of the *Twentieth Century*, by a fiat of the Apostolic Delegate, Mgr Zaleski. After this,

35. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

36. P. Fallon, quoted in Sisir Kumar Das, *The Shadow of the Cross*, p. 39.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

38. Quoted in C. GROU, *Modern and Contemporary Indian Thought (MSS)*, p. 13.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

40. *The Blade*, p. 86.

Upadhyaya vanished beyond the horizon of the Church in India and there was little awareness of the loss that was suffered.

"Friends and admirers of Upadhyaya have blamed the personality of the Delegate. But if Mgr Zaleski was autocratic, Upadhyaya was deliberately provocative."⁴¹ Thus Animananda, his closest associate and partner in every enterprise he undertook. Fr Hegglin considered the foundation of the monastery a "daring, independent procedure which caused anxiety to his superiors". Mgr Zaleski condemned the (weekly) *Sophia* as a Catholic publication with no connection with the Catholic ecclesiastical authorities, edited by "unqualified persons" who are not Catholics.⁴²

From an examination of the writings of Upadhyaya, and a study of his conduct in relation to the ecclesiastical authorities, it is difficult to substantiate these charges. Let us take them in sequence. His donning of the saffron garb received the approbation both of the Bishop of Lahore and the Archbishop of Bombay, though this hardly seemed necessary. The *Sophia*, similarly, was launched with the sanction of the Superior Regular of Bombay, and had as its collaborator Fr Hegglin, later Professor of Sanskrit at St Xavier's College, Bombay. His lecture tour in South India was undertaken at the request of the Bishop of Trichinopoly and with the permission of the Archbishop of Bombay.

The monastery at Jubbulpore has a history of which Animananda, his biographer, either had no knowledge or thought it politic to ignore. Writing in the weekly *Sophia*, on August 4th 1900, Upadhyaya notes the passing away of a holy man, in the person of the most Rev. Dr Pelvat, Catholic Bishop of Nagpur. He wrote:

Humility is said to be the queen of virtues... (Bishop Pelvat) was a model of humility, ... a man of broad sympathies free from the least prejudice against Indians whom he loved with a paternal heart. Our humble scheme of an Indian Catholic Monastery met with a reception from him that almost astonished us. He was so far at one with us, in our idea of high caste converts observing their caste rules as to eating and drinking, ... (that) he actually held his hands to his mouth, like any poor Indian, to receive the refreshing *aqua pura* that was poured out into them.⁴³

"Free from the least prejudice against Indians": was this the point at issue between Upadhyaya and Zaleski and others who opposed his plans ?

41. *The Blade*, p. 107.

42. Letter to the Archbishop of Madras, dated 20th September 1900, quoted in *The Blade*, p. 91.

43. *Weekly Sophia*, August 1900, p. 6.

Zaleski described him as an "unqualified person"—words which touched him to the quick. He recalled them repeatedly to his friends with subdued bitterness, not unmixed with sadness. Even a cursory review of his career as an apologist for the Catholic faith will show up the unfairness of this charge. In June 1896, the *Catholic Examiner* reported:

Bombay has enjoyed of late the unique sight of a Brahmin convert to the Catholic faith delivering lectures as a Catholic sannyasi.... We congratulate the energetic and indefatigable convert on the courage and the success with which he has defended the principles of Christian philosophy before his countrymen.... (We) recommend to them again the spreading of the tracts from Trichinopoly and of the *Sophia*.⁴⁴

Writing in 1928, when he had had time enough to reflect on what he said, Fr Castets, who presided at one of Upadhyaya's lectures in the Trichinopoly Town Hall in 1897, testified: "all his expressions were perfectly correct."⁴⁵

Recalling his contact with Upadhyaya in England in 1902, Fr Rickaby, no ordinary judge in matters scholarly, declared; "I have heard him much spoken against, but he made a good impression on me.... We were very friendly together, and I never discovered in him anything unorthodox.... Why some of our people talk so much against him, I never understood."⁴⁶

"Upadhyaya", writes Animananda, "was deliberately provocative. His strictures on European missionaries were not only offensive, they did great harm."⁴⁷ The monthly *Sophia* commenced publication when the Asian world was agog with the turn of events in China. In a journal that professedly covered political events, his comments on events in China were unavoidable by reason of their importance, and caustic by reason of their nature. A few samples will suffice: "The Chinese imbroglio is essentially a missionary broil. There are missionaries and missionaries... those who become all things to all men and teach the people to observe the supernatural without violating what is natural and national."⁴⁸ "Our religion teaches us to submit with all our heart to the reigning power.... In spite of this precept we advisedly exhort our countrymen to raise a hue and cry against European domination."⁴⁹ "A missionary paper hailing from Bombay does not approve of the withdrawal of the allied forces from Peking.

44. *Sophia*, June 1896, pp. 15-16.

45. *The Blade*, p. 67.

46. *The Blade*, p. 118.

47. *The Blade*, p. 107.

48. *Weekly Sophia*, July 21st, 1900, p. 2.

49. *Weekly Sophia*, August 18th, 1900, p. 6.

... The majority of the missionaries in China — there are noble exceptions — religiously believe that China must be brought under the feet of blessed Europe before she can be brought under the feet of Christ.”⁵⁰ “There is the Papal Seminary in Ceylon for the better training of indigenous priests — Sanskrit is not to be found inside it.”⁵¹

Such frank expressions of opinion were obviously not well received in certain quarters. But provocation existed on both sides as the following quotation aptly illustrates: “We earnestly beseech those who have direction of missionary organs to think and speak more kindly and more respectfully of the natives of India. If, however, they cannot see their way to take a favourable view of Indian political aspirations, we would request them to adopt the golden rule of maintaining silence.”⁵²

Upadhyaya admitted that the suppression of *Sophia* was due to his political views: “*Sophia* has been loyal to the Church, and loyal shall she remain to the end of her existence.” But, he asked, “should she remain faithless to her country’s cause?”⁵³ Till the publication of a rebuttal of the Delegate’s charges in December 1900, his conduct as a loyal son of the Church was above reproach. He bowed silently and unquestioningly to the arbitrary dissolution of his monastery at Jubbulpore; again his submissiveness before ecclesiastical authority at the out-lawing of the monthly *Sophia* was absolute. Before the final suppression of its successor, the weekly *Sophia*, he resigned the editorship to appease the authorities; but, when this led to the paper being declared to be under heathen management, he resumed the editorship. He then requested to be placed under absolute control of censorship, but this was refused. “All acts of submissiveness and concessions have been of no avail”, he lamented.

It is difficult to fault the Apostolic Delegate in the performance of his official duties. As ecclesiastical proconsul, he took his orders from Rome. The Church, under Leo XIII, was engaged in appeasing the anti-Catholic states in Europe. It could hardly follow a different polity in the sensitive areas of the colonies. Moreover, for all his leanings towards liberalism, Leo XIII “was never able to divest himself of a somewhat imperialistic conception of the Church’s role”.⁵⁴ The Delegate’s office was neither pastoral nor missionary, but bureaucratic.

50. Weekly *Sophia*, September 15th, 1900, p. 2.

51. Weekly *Sophia*, November 24th, 1900, p. 1.

52. Weekly *Sophia*, October 20th, 1900, p. 10.

53. Weekly *Sophia*, Fly-leaf “A Crisis and an Appeal”.

54. R. AUBERT et al., *The Church in a Secularized Society*, The Christian Centuries, Vol. V, p. 14.

However, it was the Jesuits during the last quarter of the 19th century — the vigilant watchdogs of Catholic orthodoxy — who first raised the alarm. Zeleski was waiting for just such a cue to act, and then proceeded to do so with bureaucratic thoroughness. It was not Zaleski the Delegate, so much as Zaleski the man, who proved unequal to the situation. If the graciousness and benevolence of Mgr Pelvat had been his, the Church in India, in a missionary doldrums as it was at the time, would have witnessed the opening of a glorious new chapter in her history that would have made ample amends for the disastrous mishandling of De Nobili's experiment. In the final analysis, it can be said with justification that Upadhyaya, more than those who opposed him, emerged with honour from this unfortunate episode. No matter what his trials, he remained a faithful son of the Church, till his death.

...And unto Death ?

But did he ? This was the question that agitated the minds of his friends and associates when the circumstances of his death were made known. A controversial figure all his life, he became even more so after his death. His last years gave evidence of an ambiguity in relation to his faith, so that it was bruited abroad that he had returned to Hinduism. Certain actions of his, like the Shuddhi ceremony he underwent a few months before his death, the lecture on Krishna which extolled the character of the god before a Hindu audience, and his refusal to list himself as a Catholic in the register of the Campbell Hospital where he died, gave evidence enough for such an impression. Yet, he could well have pleaded, as he did with reference to Anima-nanda's defection: "I have been misunderstood." Everyone of these actions was consistent with his principles. The purification ceremony had a social, not a religious meaning: "Society cannot arrogate to itself the power of removing moral defilements, but it has every right to punish social violations." Upadhyaya had declared himself a Hindu Catholic. He made a clear distinction between his social obligations which were Hindu and his religious beliefs which were Catholic. "Samaj Dharma is the strength of Hinduism, but Sadhana Dharma is not its characteristic connotation". Bolai Dev Sharma, an admirer of Upadhyaya, wrote in the journal *Devalaya*: "To submit to the laws of Varna Ashrama Dharma, though having faith in Catholicism — there lies the distinct and original contribution of Upadhyaya in the matter of harmonizing Hinduism with Christianity."⁵⁵

The lecture on Krishna was occasioned by an attack on Krishna from the Protestant scholar, the Rev. J. N. Farquhar. No Hindu

55. Quoted in *The Blade*, p. 202.

andit was ready to cross swords with him. Although known to be a Catholic, Upadhyaya was requested to undertake the task. Two lectures were delivered, the second one in English. Such a lecture, delivered in 1904, by Upadhyaya, was obviously motivated by national sentiment. He came to the defence of the Hindu race. But his philosophical stand was inspired by Bankim Chandra, whose influence on Upadhyaya was much greater than is generally realized. Upadhyaya's basic distinction between the avatar of Krishna and the incarnation of Christ was inspired by Bankim Chandra. Bankim's Dharma "was essentially Hindu doctrines explained within the framework of Comte's philosophy. To him religion was culture."⁵⁶ "God is the ideal man", declared Bankim, "and therefore, he is the ideal of man. Or to put it in other words, the ideal man or perfect man is God. Krishna is an ideal man, and therefore Krishna is God."⁵⁷ A friend asked Upadhyaya: "Why do you always speak of Krishna and never of Christ?" Upadhyaya replied: "Christ is like the sun...and Krishna, a ras-golla!" He couldn't have been clearer.

His refusal to fill the column under 'religion' in the hospital register was based on the principle that the state had no right to pry into such matters of conscience⁵⁸—a principle as valid under the autocratic regime of Lord Curzon as it is today. Ultimately the question whether Upadhyaya died a Catholic can only be answered by his contemporaries and associates. Rabindra Nath Tagore called him a Roman Catholic Medantin. Hemendra Prasad Ghose and Narendra Nath Sen, his collaborators on the *Sandhya*, were of the same opinion. Fr J. B. Hoffmann, who can be trusted to have expressed a well-founded opinion, wrote in a letter to Animananda: "Upadhyaya did not renounce the faith in the Catholic Church and he considered himself a member of the Catholic Church to the end."⁵⁹

Prophet for Today ?

Is Upadhyaya, with his ideals, his perceptions, his vision of the future Church in India and the programme he elaborated for its fulfilment, relevant to the Church today? The answer can be in the affirmative, only with certain qualifications. Upadhyaya was a man of his times and his ideas were circumscribed by the religious and social conditions in which he lived. When he stated, "What strikes every observer of the missionary field of work in India, is its frightful barrenness",⁶⁰ the statement was true at the time. He admits that

56. Sisir Kumar DAS, *The Shadow of the Cross*, p. 117.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

58. *The Blade*, p. 173.

59. *The Blade*, p. 213.

60. *The Blade*, Appendix I, p. i.

there were conversions of "famine-stricken children, and also of non-Aryans not within the pale of Hinduism." All too true in the 1900s; but no longer valid in any sense, least of all, in the rather deprecatory tone in which he made the concession. "The Gospel is preached to the poor"; and the caste Hindus in India have no pre-emptive claim on that divine ministration. And yet, in respect of them, Upadhyaya is right when he says: Christianity "stands in the corner, like an exotic stunted plant with poor foliage, showing little or no promise of blossom. Conversions are almost nil as far as the Hindu community is concerned."⁶¹ What was the reason for this fatal neglect? The 19th century Church in India was not prepared to shed its Western and foreign image and make itself native to the soil. If it had heeded at that propitious time the prophetic utterances of its greatest convert and most erudite and perceptive of its thinkers, it would not today be grappling so darkly with the problem of an Indian theology, or the even more elusive search for inculturation. This new concern is born of the realization that Hindu India will accept Christ only on its own terms. Upadhyaya realized this early in his career when he assumed the identity of sannyasi; and his subsequent success in gaining admittance into the social and religious circles of Hindu society only proved the correctness of his perception. He was an uncompromising critic of the Arya Samaj, yet he was invited to deliver a memorial lecture on Dayanand Saraswati; his vitriolic attacks on P. C. Majumdar and the Sadharan Samaj did not prevent his being requested to address their young men who were leaning towards atheism; he had once described the life of Krishna as "the source of incalculable mischief",⁶² but he was called upon to answer Farquhar's attack on this popular deity. Even modern Catholic sannyasis have often expressed surprise at the friendly reception they have received in orthodox Hindu households.

Writing of the Church in India, he said: "There has not been a single theologian, not even a philosopher, who has made any impression on the Christian science of divinity." In support of this opinion, one could go further and ask; "Has Christianity in India, in all the 2000 years of its existence in this country, produced even a heresy?" Upadhyaya's urgent demand for a Vedantic Christianity calls for the serious attention of a Church presently pre-occupied with Western European theological debates, and South American social orientations. Upadhyaya's message rings down the decades with special relevance today. "By birth we are Hindus and shall remain Hindus till death. But by virtue of our sacramental rebirth, we are Catholic."

61. Ibid.

62. *Sophia*, January 1895, p. 9.

Correspondence

A Footnote to "Rethinking Mission Policies"

Dear Editor

Though Archbishop E. D'Souza's article was published in the last November issue of *Vidyayoti*, our attention was drawn to it recently when a missionary referred to it to justify his approach to conversion. We wish to make it clear from the very beginning that whatever is expressed in this letter is written with the greatest respect and regard for one of the leading Bishops of India.

There are many points made by Archbishop Eugene D'Souza which offer us ample food for thought. Painful as it may be, we have to accept that the picture of our Missions in Northern India is not as bright as we might expect from the efforts and missionary labours spent on this region during the last two hundred years. We may have to reassess our missionary policy and revamp our technique of approach to the non-Christians.

There are also in the article many valuable suggestions. Correctives for our pastoral deficiencies are pointed out, which if brought to bear on our missionary planning, will take us a long way towards setting right errors and omissions of the past and achieving a greater measure of success in the future.

And yet on the whole the tone of the article is negative, and one ends up with a depressing feeling of defeatism. The article reads very much like a litany of failures. This is all the more striking when one knows that Archbishop Eugene D'Souza is a confirmed optimist. His criticism of our educational methods and his evaluation of the little impact we have made on our students seems to us exaggerated. Besides, the Church in North India and in other regions has been present in many fields of human endeavour and social concern which hardly get a passing reference from the Archbishop. Then again it is difficult to believe that priests in certain districts of North India find their field of apostolate so narrow (small Christian communities) and their scope so limited (difficulty of contact with the non-Christians) that they don't know what to do with their time. Is this possible in the Northern dioceses and missions where the tasks are so immense and the missionaries so few? We know a Bishop of one of the dioceses of North India who could immediately employ one hundred more priests if he had them, and they would have their hands full. Surely there are other bishops who are clamouring for more priests.

The final lines of the article leave one with doubts about the very purpose of our missionary effort. Archbishop E. D'Souza writes: "To say that 'conversion' (inverted commas his) or salvation of souls is the only or primary motive of missions is to miss the point Christ tried so hard to drive home to his apostles." It is not clear to us from the article what was the point which Christ tried so hard to drive home to his apostles.

The sentence quoted above seems to us a rather ambiguous statement, and one which may give rise to serious misunderstandings and wrong interpretations. What does the Archbishop mean by salvation of souls? For, we do believe that salvation of souls is the primary, if not exclusive, motive of missions.

In the very opening sentence of the decree *Ad Gentes*, on the Church's Missionary Activity, Vatican II defines the Church as "the universal sacrament of salvation", and while this salvation extends to the whole man, the integral man, the Church is primarily a spiritual reality, being more directly concerned with the spiritual nature of man. "Acting out of the innermost requirements of her own Catholicity and in obedience to her Founder's mandate (Mk 16, 16), she strives to proclaim the Gospel to all men" (A.G. 1).

Then again in the same decree *Ad Gentes*, while declaring what this "sacrament of salvation" is, Vatican II quotes Mk 16, 15f: "Go into the whole world; preach the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned." Hence, continues the decree, "the duty of spreading the faith and the saving work of Christ" is imposed on the Church by Christ's explicit command (A.G. 5). In all these texts *salvation* seems to be the key word.

Further on the Council explains what Missions are: "The particular efforts of the Gospel preachers sent by the Church throughout the whole world, to announce the Gospel message and plant the Church among peoples and groups which do not yet believe in Christ, are commonly called 'Missions'" (A.G. 6). It is difficult to see how the Church can be "planted among peoples and groups which do not yet believe in Christ", unless through conversion.

We certainly accept with *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that there is no dichotomy between evangelization and development (human promotion, liberation, etc.), and that human development is an important factor of evangelization. The problem arises when undue emphasis is laid on human development to the detriment of direct proclamation of the Gospel.

By saying that "conversion" or the salvation of souls is neither the exclusive (*transact*) nor the primary motive of missions (*non conceditur*), aren't we trying, more or less consciously, to provide a rationale for our failure—and consequent frustration—to bring people to Christ, or to justify our overemphasis on human development while neglecting the direct proclamation of the Gospel?

The writers of this letter are missionaries in the field. We are not professional theologians and are not therefore adept in couching our thoughts in modern theological jargon; but we wish to express in simple, but unmistakable, terms that we believe that to accept Christ, becoming his disciples through conversion, is to release the most potent liberation force in the world. "If you obey my teaching you are really my disciples; you will know the truth and the truth will make you free" (Jn 8, 31-32). "If the Son makes you free, then you will be really free" (Jn 8, 36). We believe that a person is not fully humanized and fully liberated until he has accepted Christ as his Saviour and the Church as "the sacrament of salvation".

It would be presumptuous on our part to pretend to teach one of the official teachers of the Church. We dare not. We just wished to humbly express our reaction to Archbishop Eugene D'Souza's article. We wanted to declare our agreement with the many good points in which the article abounds, and our reservations regarding certain expressions with which we find it difficult to agree.

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Leslie D.SOUZA
Pablo GIL, S.J.
Swami RAHULANAND

Continued from p. 200

The eight volumes rapidly reviewed here are sufficient indication of the broad range of the proposed collection. Its ecumenical approach (in the broad sense) is especially welcome. If, as we can expect, the collection maintains its present scholarly standard, it will become indispensable for research libraries on the history of spirituality.

G. GILMAN, S.J.

Note

A New Collection on Western Spiritual Masters

"In one series, the original writings of the universally acknowledged teachers of the Catholic, Protestant, Eastern Orthodox, Jewish, Islamic and Native American Traditions have been critically selected, translated and introduced by internationally recognized scholars and spiritual leaders." It is in these terms that the Paulist Press, New York, under Kevin A. Lynch, C.S.P., President and Publisher, announces its new 60 volume series on "The Classics of Western Spirituality — A Library of the Great Spiritual Masters". The series is concurrently published in Great Britain by SPCK, London. The editorial board of twenty-eight members, with Richard J. Payne as Editor-in-Chief, gathers an impressive international list of university scholars.

The aim of the collection is to provide an accurate English translation of the more significant classics of Western spirituality, made from the best critical texts established by specialists.

Each volume contains: a biographical note on the editors of the volume, a preface by an eminent scholar or spiritual personality, an introduction to the classic writer and his /her work, the translation with notes of a text which has been selected for its special interest in the history of spirituality and in our time, a bibliography, and a double index of topics to the introduction and to the text.

From the start, the scholarly standard is high: the editors of each volume are authorities in their field, mostly university professors. The volumes are sumptuously produced, with an artistic and colourful cover design, though in paper-back.

The publication is timely, as books on the great Western mystics are not easy to go by. The venture offers an ecumenical dimension in a field where all men of good will look for unity.

Of the twelve volumes already announced, we have received eight which we briefly review here below. They are: 1. **Origen**. *An Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer, On First Principles: Book IV, Prologue to the Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily XXVII on Numbers* (1979. Pp. xvi-293. £ 6.50). By Rowan A. GREER. Preface by H. URS VON BALTHASAR; 2. **Gregory of Nyssa**. *The Life of Moses* (1978. Pp. xvi-208. £ 5.50). By Abraham J. MALHERBE and Everett FERGUSON. Preface by John MEYENDORFF; 3. **Richard of St Victor**. *The Twelve Patriarchs, The Mystical Ark, Book III of the Trinity* (1979. Pp. xviii-425. £ 6.50). By Grover A. ZINN. Preface by Jean CHÂTILLON; 4. **Julian of Norwich**. *Showings* (1978. Pp. 369. £ 6.50). By Edmund COLLEDGE, O.S.A. and James WALSH, S.J. Preface by

Jean LECLERQ, O.S.B.; 5. Catherine of Genoa. *Purgation and Purgatory, The Spiritual Dialogue* (1979. Pp. xvi-163. £ 4.80). By Serge HUGHES and Benedict J. GROESCHEL, O.F.M.Cap. Preface by Catherine DE HUECK DOHERTY; 6. Johann Arndt. *True Christianity* (1979. Pp. xviii-301. £ 6.50). By Peter ERB. Preface by Heiko A. OBERMAN; 7. Jacob Boehme. *The Way to Christ* (1978. Pp. xviii-307. £ 6.50). By Peter ERB. Preface by Winfried ZELLER; 8. Nahman of Bratslav. *The Tales* (1978. Pp. xx-340. £ 5.50). By Arnold J. BAND. Preface by Joseph DAN.

1. **Origen.** In his preface, H. URS VON BALTHASAR stresses the fact that, in spite of the limits and dangers inherent in his philosophy, Origen (185-254) wanted first to be a Christian within the Church, nourished by the Word of God and burning with a passionate love for the Logos in Jesus Christ. Origen unites intimately the moral, intellectual and contemplative aspects of the Christian search. When the Roman empire was collapsing, he dreamt of transforming the best of Hellenistic thought to make the Christian spiritual quest intelligible to the educated non-believer and to light the fire of hope in the darkness of his age. This explains both his influence on Christian theology, monasticism and spirituality and the flaws and limitations of his thought. The present selection reveals the heart of Origen's spiritual insight: the Christian ideal of martyrdom goes hand in hand with his understanding of prayer and is derived from Scripture. Hence Book IV of *On First Principles* gives Origen's approach to the Bible as basis of his spirituality; the last two excerpts illustrate his use of Scripture in his commentaries and homilies.

2. **Gregory of Nyssa** (332-395) has been called by Cardinal Daniélou the founder of mystical theology in the Church. From the abundant work of the most subtle of the 4th century Cappadocian theologians, *The Life of Moses*, or *Treatise on the Perfection of Virtues*, has been selected as a typical example of St Gregory's spiritual exegesis and of his synthesis of Hellenistic (Alexandrian) and Jewish traditions. He uses a traditional method, influenced by Philo and Origen, but in a very original way. Throughout the treatise he first gives the history or paraphrase of the Biblical narrative, and then the *theoria* or spiritual meaning of the story. Characteristic of the work is the theme of the eternal progress in following God "from glory to glory", towards an ever greater transformation into his likeness in true love. This particular work is part of a programme to provide an undergirding for the monastic movement organized by St Basil, Gregory's brother. This volume, which won the Christian Research Foundation Award in 1967, is the first complete translation of the *Life* into English.

3. **Richard of St Victor** (d. 1173) came from Scotland to the then young Abbey of St Victor of the Canons Regular living under the Rule of St Augustine in Paris. After Hugh, he developed the Victorine biblical and theological spirituality. As an exponent of the mystical life, he greatly influenced St Bonaventure, the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* and some of the German and Flemish mystics. He is the link between the Greek tradition of Pseudo-Dionysius and

the Latin mystical awakening of medieval Europe. *The Twelve Patriarchs*, known as *Benjamin Minor*, deals with the preparation for contemplation; *The Mystical Ark*, or *Benjamin Major*, is a detailed exposition of the graces of contemplation in their various modes. Richard makes frequent use of biblical symbolism and personification allegory — methods commonly used in the Middle Ages, but which for us require an initiation. Such an initiation is provided here in a long introduction. The last text presented in the volume is a theology of love. It throws light on the mystery of the Trinity by attempting to account for the plurality of Persons in God through the demands of interpersonal love. It contains admirable pages. We have here the first full English translation of this work.

4. **Julian of Norwich.** This volume presents a modernized version of Julian of Norwich's *Showings*, based on the first complete critical edition, made by the same authors and published under the title: *A Book of Showings to the anchoress Julian of Norwich* (Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1978). The 16 "showings" or revelations of God's love to the English mystic of the late 14th century (1342-1423) have come to us in a short and a long form. The present translation contains both texts. They are introduced and situated in the context of Catholic spirituality by a detailed analysis, which gathers also the few bio-data of the now famous anchoress. A preface by Jean LECLERCQ, the well-known monk and medievalist of Clervaux, shows the importance of this mystical work for our time, stressing its theology of the fulness of divine love and of the "courtesy of God" experienced in prayer. Julian experienced God also as "our Mother" and had visions of Christ's humanity and passion.

5. **Catherine of Genoa.** Catherine DE HUECK DOHERTY, foundress, with her husband, of the Madonna House at Combermere, Ontario, and an apostle of the slums, whose vocation evokes something of the Genoa saint, writes the preface to this volume. She tells us that "a mystic is simply a man or a woman in love with God", who radiates love; "extraordinary phenomena are secondary to loving God and only lead to spiritual disaster for those who pursue them" (pp. xiiiif). St Catherine (1447-1510) also was a married woman, heroically devoted to the poor in a Genoa hospital, while throughout that very period experiencing mystical visions and ecstasies. Her "doctrine" was consigned to writing by her friends. The present volume presents the translation with notes of the best critical text available of: 1. *Purgation and Purgatory*, traditionally known as *Treatise on Purgatory*, but based on a revelation of the meaning of purgation in this life and hereafter; 2. *The Spiritual Dialogue*, describing, partly in allegorical figures and partly through biographical data, the stages of Catherine's spiritual development up till her dramatic and saintly death. The introduction deals with her doctrine and with the problems raised by the mystical phenomena she underwent. It highlights her deep influence on both Catholics and Protestants at the time of the Reformation and after.

6. **Johann Arndt.** It is thanks to Pastor Johann ARNDT (1555-1621) that the riches of medieval monasticism and its mystical tradition

have been preserved within the Lutheran Reformation. He was inspired by St Bernard, Angela of Foligno, John Tauler and Thomas a Kempis. *True Christianity*, his main "mystical" work and one of the most important in the Protestant tradition, marked him as the "prophet of interior Protestantism" (A. Schweitzer) and the "father of German pietism" in its true primitive form of late 17th century. For this Lutheran "mystic", a follower of Melancthon, justification by faith alone does not preclude but unleashes Christian love and action in the Church and the world. His work is more concerned with practical spiritual revival than with the scholarly speculation of Lutheran orthodoxy with which he entered into some controversy. ARNDT published the first book of *True Christianity* in 1605; books 2 to 4 in 1610. These four books went through 20 editions in his life time. Books 5 and 6 were added after his death. The present volume translates substantially Book 1, and the 2nd part of Book 5 on mystical union. Of the rest of the work only selected excerpts are translated and connected by paraphrases.

7. **Jacob Boehme.** The Görlitz Lutheran shoemaker and visionary, Jacob Boehme (1575-1624), did not only write the theological, or rather theosophical works which brought on him the attacks of the orthodox churchmen of his city; but, during the last four years of his life, this "Christian gnostic" (N. Berdyaev) also wrote the nine separate treatises, making up *The Way to Christ*, which were published together by his followers after his death (1682). As they represent his final theological positions, they may serve as the best introduction to his thought and to the Boehmist tradition. They were meant as a meditation guide for the Christian, from a sinful state to the joy of ecstatic experience and maturity through a repentant self-understanding and the birth to a new life. They include practical devotional rules, the prayer of the heart, material for edification and meditation. Not unlike J. Arndt, BOEHME unites speculation with living piety. He believed his writing to be inspired by the Spirit and by his experiences of burning love. This work has greatly influenced the Protestant pietism and revival of the 19th century. From the 4th Treatise onwards, traces of his earlier speculations, at times pantheistic or dualistic in expression, make for difficult reading.

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Continued on p. 196

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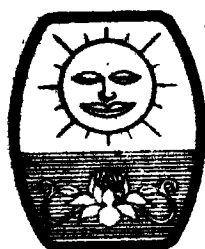
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Muslim-Christian Dialogue

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MAY 1980

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In This Issue

Christian dialogue with Islam has been notoriously difficult. Yet considerable progress has been made in recent years, as is eloquently borne out by such international meetings as the Muslim-Christian Congress held at Tripoli in 1976. It seems no exaggeration to say that Indian Muslims and Christians are in a privileged position to promote this dialogue. For one thing, the Muslim population of India, its minority status notwithstanding, is the second highest in the world, lower only than Indonesia's; for another, Muslims and Christians in India share common persuasions on human and religious issues which, not to mention the monotheistic faith common to both religions, offer ground for mutual understanding. In this context it is heartening to witness in the Indian Church a heightened interest in Islam. We on our part wish to devote this issue of VIDYAJYOTI to the Muslim-Christian dialogue.

Theologically, the Christian understanding of the mystery of Jesus Christ has been in the past, and remains today, the main dividing line between Islam and Christianity. While this touches on the very core of the Christian faith which admits of no compromise, the fact remains that prejudices accumulated through the centuries have hardened the antagonisms. There is need for dispelling deep-seated misunderstandings, for stressing the Qur'ân's genuine appreciation of Jesus the Prophet, for sympathising with the motives for which, in his historical circumstances, Muhammad refused the Christian interpretation. In an article, entitled "Jesus — A Sign for Christians and Muslims", Fr M. FITZGERALD shows the way towards a fruitful dialogue on this central issue. Fr C. TROLL pursues the same line while reviewing some recent Christian literature on nascent Islam.

But, no matter how important theological dialogue may be, it is bound to remain sterile unless accompanied with a dialogue of life. Or rather, to set things in their right order, dialogue ought to begin with life. This, perhaps, is where we still mostly fail. Hence the interest of Fr L. MASCARENHAS' article on "Basic Christian Communities in an Islamic Setting". He speaks from his own experience, in Karachi, Pakistan, of sharing with a group of Franciscan students the life of their Muslim neighbourhood. He shows how communion of life causes prejudices to crumble down and interaction to take place.

The Second Bishops' Institute for Inter-Religious Affairs (BIRA II) of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in November 1979, with the purpose of deepening "our understanding of and commitment to dialogue with Muslims". We publish in our Documentation Section the important Statement issued by the Conference.

Jesus—A Sign for Christians and Muslims

Michael FITZGERALD, W.F.*

You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected — and a sword will pierce your own soul too so that the secret thoughts of many will be laid bare.

(Lk 2, 34-35)

And she who guarded her virginity, so We breathed into her of Our Spirit and appointed her and her son to be a sign unto all beings.

(Qur'an 21, 91)

BOTH the Gospel and the Qur'an present Jesus as a sign, and in that sign the Virgin Mary is associated. A sign points to something else; it leads us on. In the Gospel Jesus is essentially a sign of salvation: "My eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see" (Lk 2, 30-31). He is a sign of the irruption of God's love in the world, fulfilling the OT prophecies (cf. Lk 4, 18-19). John sums it up by saying: "God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son, so that we could have life through him" (1 Jn 4, 9).

In the Qur'an this dimension of love is largely absent. The Qur'an insists much more on the power of God. God, who created the world simply by his word, has no difficulty in bringing about the virginal birth of Jesus. He who brought about this miraculous birth will also be able to bring about the new birth of mankind at the general resurrection. In this sense Jesus can also be said to be a "sign of the Hour" (Q. 43, 61).

Thus if Jesus and Mary are brought onto a height (Q. 23, 50), this is not the Mount of Golgotha from which Jesus, in the presence of his mother, showing that love than which there is no greater, would draw all men to himself and through him to the Father. For Islam, Jesus and Mary are united in the single sign of God's creative power.

It is worth perhaps stressing that a sign is only perceived as such where there is faith. Jesus replies to the Baptist's question: "Are you

*Fr Michael FITZGERALD, W. F., is professor at the Pontifical Institute of Islamic Studies, Rome. This paper was written in view of the International Congress on Mission, held at Manila in December 1979 (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1980, pp. 76-82). It is published here with permission. (Ed.)

the one who is to come? Go back and tell what you have seen and heard: the blind see again, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, the Good News is proclaimed to the poor, and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me" (Lk 7, 22-23). Similarly the Qur'ān, which insists very much on the signs of God's power, will often proclaim: "in these are signs for those who believe" (cf. Q. 16, 79). Faith is a gift and a mystery. It is not surprising that the sign of Jesus should be perceived in different ways.

In discussing the Islamic perception of Jesus, I propose to articulate my paper in the following way. First, to ask how far the Good News of the Gospel is known and received in Islam. Secondly, since the Good News can be identified with the person of Jesus, to inquire into the Islamic understanding of his person. Finally, to discuss briefly in what way Jesus can be a subject of dialogue between Christians and Muslims.

The Gospel Announced by Jesus

The Qur'ān insists that Jesus has been sent as a *Messenger*, and that he has been given as his special message, the *Gospel* (cf. Q. 3, 48; 5, 46; 19, 30; 57, 27). It is said that in this Gospel are to be found *guidance, light and admonition* for the God-fearing. It is enjoined upon the people of the Gospel that they judge according to what God has sent down (Q. 5, 46-47). The global evaluation is thus positive.

Yet if we inquire as to the actual content of the Gospel, the Qur'ān gives us little information. Jesus says: "I will inform you too of what things you eat, and what you treasure up in your houses" (Q. 3, 49). There are several passages in the gospels of which these words could be a reminiscence. There is Jesus' teaching on the clean and the unclean, with his insistence that it is what comes out of a man's mouth from the heart which makes a man unclean (cf. Mt 15, 10-20). Or one thinks of the words in the Sermon on the Mount which conclude: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt 6, 19-21). Or is it an allusion to the parable of the foolish man who wished to hoard up all his goods, counting on his own wealth to subsist, instead of making himself rich in the sight of God (cf. Lk 12, 13-21)? This does in fact find an echo in Qur'ānic preaching:

As for him who gives and is God-fearing and believes in the truth of the reward most fair, We shall ease him to the Easing.

Whereas the one who is miserly and considers himself sufficient, and says the reward most fair is a lie, him We shall ease to the Hardship. His wealth will be of no use to him when he perishes" (Q. 92, 5-11).

Woe to every backbiter, slanderer, who has gathered riches and counted them over, thinking his riches have made him immortal! No indeed; he shall be thrust into the Crusher; . . . The fire of God enkindled, roaring over the hearts, covered down upon them in columns outstretched" (Q. 104 *passim*).

Jesus gives the following description of his mission. He has come "to confirm the truth of the Torah" and "to make lawful to you certain things that before were forbidden to you" (Q. 3, 50). We can think here of Jesus' conflict with the Pharisees over human traditions (cf. Mk 7, 1-13), or about the observance of the Sabbath (Mk 2, 23-3, 6). However the description would appear to be rather one-sided, for Jesus, in confirming the Torah, also refined its provisions, drawing attention to the need for purity of heart, and showing how the law of love must go beyond the strict minimum (cf. Mt 5, 20-48).

Jesus concludes: "Surely God is my Lord and your Lord; so serve Him. This is a straight path" (Q. 3, 51). This is repeated later. God questions Jesus: "O Jesus, son of Mary, did you say to men: 'Take me and my mother as gods apart from God'?" Jesus replies: "It is not for me to say what I have no right to. . . . I said to them only what you commanded me: 'Serve God, my Lord and your Lord'" (Q. 5, 116-117). A slightly different version is given in another passage: "I have come to you", says Jesus, "with Wisdom, that I may make clear to you some of the things about which you differed. So fear God and obey me. God is my Lord and your Lord. Serve Him. This is a straight path" (Q. 43, 63).

Jesus' message is pared down to the essential, and thus agrees with the message repeated down the ages by all the prophets: "So fear God and obey me" (cf. Q. 26, 108.126.144, etc.). One would tend to agree with Father Jomier when he remarks that Jesus describes his mission at the level of the most ordinary religious experience. His words are clichés, or at the most the expression of first truths, without any allusion to the specific message of the Gospel.¹

One last point is to be mentioned. In the Islamic view of things Jesus is one of a series of prophets. He is not the last of the prophets. This place is reserved to Muḥammad. Thus we find in the Qur'ānic preaching of Jesus the prediction that another prophet is to come. "I am the Messenger of God to you. . . giving good tidings of a Messenger who will come after me, whose name will be Ahmad" (Q. 61, 6). Islamic tradition has always seen here the foretelling of the coming of Muḥammad, whereas Christians naturally have denied that such a prediction is to be found in the Gospel message.

1. J. JOMIER, *Les grands thèmes du Coran*, Paris, Centurion, 1978, pp. 86-87. For a fuller treatment of the Qur'ānic figure of Jesus see G. PARRINDER, *Jesus in the Qur'an*, London, Faber and Faber, 1965.

But this discussion takes us beyond the actual Qur'ānic text to the text of the Gospel itself. How far is this known to Muslims?

Muslim Attitude to the Gospel

The Qur'ān is said to have been sent down to confirm and correct the previous holy books. This has been judged necessary because it is felt that the Torah and the Gospel are not the original Scriptures revealed by God. The Qur'ān in several places accuses the Jews of having tampered (*tahrif*) with their Scriptures, of perverting words from their meanings, of having forgotten part of the message (cf. Q. 2, 75; 4, 46; 5, 13; 5, 41). Sometimes this accusation is extended to Christians, though in actual fact the Qur'ān does not say that Christians have altered their Scriptures, but only that they have forgotten part of the "reminder" given to them (cf. Q. 5, 13). The prediction of Muḥammad's coming would be a case in point.

Generally however the Gospels of the Christian tradition are not held to be authentic documents. They do not come up to the Qur'ānic standard of Scripture. They are too full of biographical details — not a straight record of Jesus' preaching — and there are far too many discrepancies in the various accounts. These four Gospels (and were there not others too?) are held to be based on unreliable traditions. This has led the majority of Muslims to give scant attention to the actual gospel texts, and to be content to judge Christianity by what the Qur'ān says of it.

There are exceptions to this. Ghazālī, in his refutation of Scriptures is one. The historian al-Ya'qūbī, in his universal history, gives an objective presentation of the Gospels. In his account of the Annunciation according to Luke, for example, he does not scruple to report the angel's words: "He shall be holy and shall be called Son of God." He summarizes the prologue of St John's Gospel. He records the Gospel description of the crucifixion and death of Jesus. It is only after this that he recalls the Qur'ānic doctrine, as it were, dotting the i's and crossing the t's: "This is what the Gospels say, but there is complete discrepancy between them. God has said: 'Yet they did not slay him, neither crucified him; only a likeness of that was shown to them' (Q. 4, 156).²

Yet the diffidence with regard to the Gospel text perhaps explains why words of Jesus appear in Islamic tradition, but severed from their context. It is probable that many such sayings were fashioned into *ḥadith-s* (oral traditions) by Christian converts to Islam. A couple

2. cf. André FERRE, "L'historien al-Ya'qūbī et les Évangiles", in *Islamochristiana* 3 (1977), pp. 65-83.

of examples will be sufficient. In a *ḥadīth qudsī* (a tradition in which Muḥammad speaks in the name of God) we find God saying:

O Son of Adam, I was sick and you did not visit me !
 How could I visit you, O Master of the Universe ?
 Did you not know that so-and-so, my servant, was sick ?
 And you did not visit him. Did you not know that had you visited him you would have found Me by his side ?

O Son of Adam, I asked you for something to eat and you refused me nourishment.

How could I nourish you, O Master of the Universe ?
 Did you not know that so-and-so, my servant, asked you for food ?
 And you gave him nothing. Did you not know that had you fed him you would have found Me by his side ?

O Son of Adam, I asked for something to drink and you did not quench my thirst.

How could I quench your thirst, O Master of the Universe ?
 So-and-so, my servant, asked you for something to drink.
 And you did not quench his thirst. Had you done so you would have found me at his side.³

The following is a tradition found in the Book of Repentance of Ghazālī's *Iḥyā, ʿulūm al-dīn*:

God rejoices more at the repentance of a believing servant than would rejoice a man who, as the story goes, went down to an unhealthy desert land with his mount laden with food and drink. He stretched himself out and slept for a bit. When he woke up, behold his mount was gone. He went off to look for it until he was weighed down by heat, thirst and all that God permits in such a situation. Then he said to himself: 'I will go back to where I was and sleep until death comes.' He put his head on his arm to die. When he awoke, behold his mount was by him with his provisions and drink. Well then, God is more delighted at the conversion of his believing servant than this man at the return of his mount.⁴

This cannot but remind the Christian reader of the Gospel parables of the Lost Coin, the Lost Sheep and the Lost Son (cf. Lk 15) where God's joy at forgiving sinners is revealed to us.

A well-known *ḥadīth*, also found in Ghazālī's *Iḥyā'*, has God saying:

I have prepared for my true servants what no eye has ever seen, what no ear has ever heard, and what has never come into the heart of man.⁵

Here we recognize the words of St Paul (1 Cor 2, 9) which he himself had adapted from Isaiah 64, 3.

3. Quoted by M. BORRMANS in *Islamochristiana* 4 (1978), p. 33.

4. Cf. *Encounter* (Documents for Muslim-Christian Understanding), n. 46 (June-July 1978), "Repentance in Muslim Traditions", p. 3.

5. Cf. *Encounter* n. 26 (June-July 1976), "Love of God in Muslim Traditions".

Thus it is that in Islamic spiritual writings, through the traditions particularly, some of the Gospel values and even scriptural sayings have been handed down, without the sources being explicitly recognized.

There are Muslims who are not satisfied with this vague debt to Christian Scriptures. They feel that the doctrine of *tahrif* is not so clear that these Scriptures can be dismissed out of hand. They would say that Muslims have a duty to investigate them, and re-discover the true Gospel.

This attitude is not entirely new. It can be found for instance in the writings of an influential Indian author of the last century, Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. So far was he from considering the biblical text totally corrupt that he set himself to write a commentary on the Gospel. His choice of the Sermon on the Mount in St Matthew is significant. For Aḥmad Khān, applying Islamic principles in his exegesis, did not accept the Gospels in their entirety. But he felt that the genuine *Injil* referred to in the Qur'ān could be discerned within the Gospel texts. He held that Jesus, born solely through the influence of the Spirit, had brought a spiritual light which had been lacking to mankind prior to his birth. And for Aḥmad Khān the teaching of Jesus on the inner practice of the religious law corresponded to what is best in Islamic spirituality. Thus he could say that the Christian Scriptures, critically read, are still relevant to Muslims.⁶

Contemporary Muslims too have re-awakened their interest in the New Testament. The "Good News" of Jesus is addressed to all men, to Muslims as well as Christians. So they too have the right and duty to read and scrutinize the NT writings in order to re-discover Jesus' message.⁷ It may be appropriate here to recall the following recommendation accepted at the Christian-Muslim dialogue in Tripoli, February 1976:

The Christian side expresses the wish that the Muslim side pursue historical research and studies of relative in-depth interpretation for a real and scientific evaluation of the Holy Book (*Recommendations*, n. 13).

It is known from the context of the meeting that what is requested here is an investigation not of the Qur'ān but of the Bible.⁸

On the other hand a good number of Muslims familiar with the Gospel tend to dismiss it, not for being unreliable, but for being too idealistic. The Commentary of the Manār, the work of Muḥammad

6. Cf. Christian W. TROLL, "Sayyid Aḥmad Khān on Matthew 5, 17-20", in *Islamochristiana* 3 (1977), pp. 99-105.

7. Cf. R. CASPAR, "Le groupe de recherches islamo-chrétien", in *Islamochristiana* 4 (1978), p. 182.

8. Cf. "Muslim-Christian Congress, Tripoli 1-6 February 1976", *White Fathers Current Documentation*, n. 5 (April 1976), pp. 81, 83-84.

‘Abduh (d. 1905) and his disciples
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9. Cf. M. BOREMANS, “Le commerc
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“reformer” of Israel, Jesus, the Messiah, i.e. Materialism) and to invite them to its re- opposed to their excessive desire for material or spiritual goods; to their excessive egoism and altruism (according to which Christians forgetfulness), to their excessive cult of the demanding quest for its spirit.”

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‘Abduh (d. 1905) and his disciple Rashīd Ridā (d. 1935), puts it this way:

Then came at last the great “reformer” of Israel, Jesus, the Messiah, to destroy this attitude of theirs (i.e. Materialism) and to invite them to its opposite or contrary. He therefore opposed to their excessive desire for material goods an exaggerated quest for spiritual goods; to their excessive egoism he opposed a similarly exaggerated altruism (according to which Christians are cited as an example of self-forgetfulness), to their excessive cult of the letter of the Law he opposed a demanding quest for its spirit.⁹

In an apologetic, familiar in Islamic writings since the time of M.‘Abduh, Jesus’ message is said to have corresponded to humanity’s adolescent period. It was a necessary stage, following on that of infancy when men had to be given the strict do’s and don’ts of the Mosaic Law. But the adolescent élan, with all its excesses (blessed are the poor, love your enemies, turn the other cheek, etc.), cannot last. Its energies have to be canalized. Justice and mercy have to be harmonized in a way which appeals not to sentiment alone but to man’s reason. This combination is to be found in Islam, the religion for a humanity which has come of age.

The Person of Jesus

If the message of Jesus is firmly placed within the Islamic framework, so too is his person. As has been pointed out above, Jesus is seen primarily as a prophet. He figures prominently in various lists of the prophets, of whom Islam is proud to say that it makes no division between any of them (cf. Q. 3, 84). By this is meant that Islam accepts all the prophets, even those whose stories have not been related (cf. Q. 4, 164). This does not mean that all the prophets are equal, for some are preferred above others (cf. Q. 2, 253). It would seem that Jesus is amongst this number. Not only is he one of those who have received a Book (together with Moses — the Torah, David — the Psalms, and Muḥammad — the Qur’ān), but he is included in a list of prophets (Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muḥammad) with whom God has made a covenant (Q. 33, 7). Thus it can be said that Jesus occupies an important place, an essential place even, in the Islamic vision of mankind’s religious history.

Yet Jesus transcends the ordinary run-of-the-mill Messenger. He has certain privileges, certain titles, which set him apart. He is

9. Cf. M. BORRMANS, “Le commentaire du Manar à propos du verset coranique sur l’amitié des Musulmans pour les Chrétiens (5, 82)”, in *Islamochristiana* 1 (1975) p. 81. See also M. ‘ABDUH, *Risālat-al-tawḥīd*; in English, *The Theology of Unity*, translated by I. MUS’AD and K. CRAGG, London, Allen and Unwin, 1966. Similar ideas are to be found in K. HUSAYN, *al-wāḍi‘ al-muqaddas*, Cairo, 1968 (in English, *The Hallowed Vale*, translated by K. CRAGG).

born of a virgin (Q. 3, 47); he speaks while still in the cradle (Q. 3, 46); he works many miracles (Q. 3, 49); he is lifted up to God (Q. 3, 46); he and his mother are protected from Satan (Q. 3, 36). So he is pure (Q. 19, 19), illustrious, one of God's favourites. His name is Messiah (Q. 3, 45). He is known as a Word from God (Q. 3, 45; 4, 171), a Spirit from God (Q. 4, 171). As we have seen already, together with his mother he is a sign for all beings.

Some commentators seem to minimize the exceptional qualities of Jesus. The example I have to hand is that of the Azharite 'Abd al-Jalil 'Isa.¹⁰ With regard to the title "Word of God" he follows the majority of the Muslim commentators in seeing in this a reference to God's creative word. Jesus is not the Word itself, but rather the "outward minifestation" of this word. God has only to say "Be" and a thing is. By bringing about Jesus' birth of a virgin, God gives a sign of his immense power. But in fact this is not the most wonderful thing he has done. In Qur'ān 3, 59 Jesus is compared to Adam. 'Abd al-Jalil 'Isa comments: "Jesus' birth is easier to understand than that of Adam, who had neither father nor mother."

Jesus is also called "a spirit from God". Now the exact meaning of the word Spirit (*rūḥ*) is hard to determine in the Qur'ān. The commentator's explanation of this is that Jesus is one of God's mysteries (*sirr min asrārihi*), with regard to the way he has been brought into existence, and with regard to his miracles. In several places it is said that Jesus has been strengthened by the Spirit of Holiness (*rūḥ al-quḍus*) (Q. 2, 87; 5, 110). It is said succinctly that this refers to the Angel Gabriel. It is not made clear whether the angel's role in Jesus' birth is meant (cf. Q. 21, 91), or whether, as the angel of revelation, he plays a further role in Jesus' life.

One last example of this minimizing tendency. In the Qur'ān, 3, 30, Jesus, speaking in the cradle, declares: "I am God's servant. He has given me the Book and made me a Prophet." The commentator takes the verbs as indicating God's irrevocable decision to bring this about. While this interpretation can be justified grammatically, it nevertheless takes away one of the privileges of Jesus. It is held that Prophets are called in their maturity, at about the age of forty. Jesus (and John the Baptist) are special cases in that they were made prophets right from the very first moment of their existence.

It may be that I am reading too much into these summary annotations. However, if Muslims wish, as it were, to put Jesus in his place, in order to counteract what are seen to be exaggerations on the

10. *Al-mushaf al-muyassar*, Beirut, Dār al-fikr, 6th edition, 1394 (1974).

Christian side, there are many Qur'ānic texts they can appeal to. The Qur'ān constantly calls Jesus "Son of Mary", and just as constantly denies that he is Son of God. Jesus "is but the Messenger of God. . . . Glory be to God that He should have a son" (Q. 4, 171). In Qur'ān 5, 116, Jesus is asked by God: "Did you say to men: 'Take me and my mother as gods apart from God ?'" He replies: "To You be glory. It is not for me to say what I have no right to. . . . I only said to them what you commanded me to: 'Serve God, my Lord and your Lord'." I should like to return to these texts later on to reflect on them from a Christian point of view. Here let me just repeat that for many Muslims they provide a definite and definitive statement about the person of Jesus. The conclusion added to the well-known passage in Sūrat Maryam would appear to be admirably clear:

That is Jesus, son of Mary, in word of truth, concerning which they are doubting. It is not for God to take a Son to Himself. Glory be to Him. When He decrees a thing He but says to it: "Be"; and it is. Surely God is my Lord and your Lord; so serve Him. This is a straight path (Q. 19, 34-36).

Yet strangely enough — and is this not a cause for gratitude ? — there are Muslims who will not accept this as a final word. A Muslim friend of mine has said how important it is for Muslims to be open to the Christian understanding of Jesus, not just as this is to be found in the texts of Scriptures, but perhaps even more in the living tradition, in the experience of Christians. The Algebrían scholar, Ali Merad, who is very active in Christian-Muslim dialogue, has put it this way. He first of all appeals to passages in Sura 3, where the Qur'ān exhorts both Christians and Muslims to compare their understanding of the truth, and to seek humbly, in earnest prayer before God, to grasp the truth better.¹¹ He goes on to ask whether the Qur'ān, with regard to Christ, really wishes to present the ultimate meaning, a truth forever fixed by divine decree. Is not its aim to provoke questions regarding God's plan, rather than to give definitive answers ? On the basis of the Qur'ānic texts he himself puts the following question: there is in the Qur'ān a refusal to confess the divinity of Christ; but is the "humanization" of Jesus so absolute, is the "demythologization" of his divinity so radical ? He refers here to the titles already discussed, "God's Word", "a Spirit from God". Elsewhere he has also pointed out that, whereas Muḥammad states "I am only a mortal, like you are" (Q. 18, 110; 41, 6), echoing the words of other Messengers (cf. Q. 14, 11), the term mortal (*bashar*) is never found on the lips of Jesus. This simple negative indication confirms the mysterious character of Jesus which is very hard to

11. He refers to Q. 3, 55.61.64.65.66,

grasp.¹² So, concludes Merad, it would be presumptuous for Muslims to declare that they hold the absolute truth concerning Christ and that therefore they are dispensed from dialogue. But, similarly, Christians must recognize that Christ remains at the centre of the questions the Qur'ān puts to them.¹³ These remarks may provide a pointer to the way forward.

The Way Forward

As Christians Jesus is certainly at the centre of our preoccupations, and Merad tells us that he is central, too, to the interrogations Islam puts to us. So the question of Jesus can hardly be avoided. Yet it is a very difficult subject to approach. How are we to proceed? There are two extremes to be avoided, both an excessive belligerence and an excessive irenicism.

There is no point in engaging in polemics, in trading text for text. This is a completely sterile venture. Where convictions are solidly anchored, they will not be changed by argument. If they are not strong, it is unfair to attack them in this way. If in some quarters, there is a renewed interest in the polemical literature of medieval times, it cannot be in order to revive unprofitable arguments. It can only be that there are lessons to be learnt from the past. First, that the worst examples of polemics are to be found when the argument is conducted on the basis of inadequate knowledge, on half-truths and prejudices. Secondly and on the other hand, the most interesting examples are where the discussion is carried through on the basis of sound information and is animated by respect. And here it will be seen that Christians, trying to explain the mysteries of Christ to their Muslim interlocutors, did not hesitate to innovate and forge a new vocabulary. They were modest, too, especially the Nestorians, in admitting that the Incarnation cannot be fully explained. Yet, because of this respect for the mystery, they were able to be firm in maintaining

12. As against this one could point to Q. 5, 75: "The Messiah son of Mary, was only a Messenger: *Messengers before him passed away*; his mother was a just woman; *they both ate food*." This would seem to underline the quality of mortality. On the other hand, when it is said of Jesus that he is "near-stationed to God" (Q. 3, 45), the word used, *min al-muqarrabīn*, is found elsewhere applied to the angels (Q. 4, 172: 83, 21) — perhaps due to the influence of the like-sounding Cherubim. The fact that Jesus is raised up alive could also be taken as an indication of an angelic, or at least super-human nature. In this context one could recall that in early Judeo-Christian speculation — a theological current which probably permeated in some degree into Arabia — the category of angel is applied to Jesus Cf. J. DANĒLOU, *The Theology of Judeo-Christianity*.

13. Ali MERAD, "Dialogue Islamo-Chrétien: pour la recherche d'un langage commun", in *Islamochristiana* 1 (1975), pp. 1-10, especially pp. 4-7. See also his article "Le Christ dans le Coran", in *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 5 (1968).

the absolute transcendence of God, which is so important for Muslims.¹⁴

It is not profitable either to be too accommodating, and to overlook oppositions where they really exist. The temptation here is perhaps not so much for the Christian to forego his own beliefs as to read these into the Qur'ānic texts. One might say, for instance, that since the Qur'ān gives the title "Word" to Jesus it is obvious that it admits that he is the Second Person of the Trinity. An extreme example of this tendency is to be found in G. Basetti-Sani's *The Koran in the Light of Christ*, where the general principle is adopted that the entire content and whole aim of the Qur'ān is christological. It is obvious that such a forced interpretation will destroy dialogue, not promote it.¹⁵

Does this mean that the NT writings are to remain closed to Muslims, the Qur'ān closed to Christians? Not necessarily so. One can read the Scripture of the other religion in the light of one's own faith, provided one respects the total context.

As an example of this one could refer to Kamil Husayn's book on the crucifixion, *al-Qarya al-zālīma (City of Wrong: A Friday in Jerusalem)*, translated by K. Cragg, Djambatan, Amsterdam 1959). This is a psychological study, a meditation on the attitudes of various categories of people to the Passion of Jesus; because of this the author is able to leave aside the question of what actually happened at the crucifixion.¹⁶ Another example would be the forthcoming book by an Indian Muslim, Hasan Askari, on the Sermon on the Mount.

From the Christian side Kenneth Cragg provides a striking illustration. He considers the Qur'ānic text: "Messiah will never scorn to be servant to God" (Q. 4, 172). He sees there a kinship of thought with the christological hymn in Philippians 2, 6-8. In the Qur'ān the truth is made the ground for the view that the Christ-servant would never pretend to "sonship". Paul sees the acceptance of servanthood as the very fulfilment of sonship. There is a point of contact, the 'denominator' of 'servanthood', but the conclusions drawn are diametrically opposed.

The Christian reason for identifying "Sonship" in Jesus, namely the will to self-expenditure, is the Qur'ānic reason for denying it. The two, we might say, are united in differing. The Christian conviction is that there is a "ser-

14. Cf. the on-going bibliography of Christian-Muslim dialogue in *Islamochristiana*, and the studies of M. HAYEK on 'Ammar al-Basri, *Islamochristiana* 2 (1976), pp. 69-113, and of R. CASPAR, on the Catholicos Timothy I, *Islamochristiana* 3 (1977), pp. 107-175.

15. For examples of some of the aberrations this can lead to see the critical review by J. M. GAUDEUL in *Worldmission* vol. 30, n. 1 (Spring 1979), pp. 58-60.

16. The reality of the crucifixion is denied in the Qur'ān 4, 157-158.

vice only the Son can bring, in that the divine deed, namely redemption, is divinely done.¹⁷

There are many statements in the Qur'ān which can spark off reflection. Let us consider the words put in the mouth of Jesus: "You know what is in my soul, whereas I do not know what is in your soul" (Q. 5, 116). A Christian's first reaction to these words spoken to God might be negative, contrasting them with the statement of Jesus in the Gospel: "Everything has been entrusted to me by the Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him" (Mt 11, 27). Is there not a communion here which the Qur'ānic text denies? And yet on further reflection the words of the Qur'ān are seen to express the truth. A sound Christian theology, which takes seriously the affirmation of Chalcedon that the Incarnation brings about no "mixture" of the two natures in Christ, must conclude that Jesus, the son of Mary, had to live by his human wits — to put it rather crudely.¹⁸

Is there not a danger here of falling into the trap mentioned above, namely that of "Christianizing" the Qur'ān? There is, I think, an essential difference. One is not saying: "This is the real meaning of the Qur'ān which you Muslims have failed to understand." That would be sheer arrogance. One is saying: "I know, or I think I know, what the Qur'ānic text means to you. Here is what it suggests to me." What is proposed is not a take-over of the text, but a plurality of "readings". It is obvious too that this procedure must be reciprocal; the way must be open to the Muslim partner also to give his understanding of the Bible.

Such an undertaking requires a great deal of trust and openness, a serenity in one's own faith which will be a guarantee against aggressive defensiveness. It demands modesty, tact, and an understanding of religious sensibilities. This is extremely important. A Muslim should be aware of what is likely to be the Christian reaction if the texts on the Holy Spirit are interpreted as referring to Muḥammad and the Qur'ān. Similarly a Christian must take into account the Muslim's instinctive recoil at anything which seems to impugn the divine transcendence. In a mysterious passage in the Qur'ān Muḥammad is commanded to say: "If the All-Merciful has a son, then I am the first to serve him" (Q. 43, 81). That the condition, grammatically

17. Kenneth CRAGG, "Legacies and Hopes in Christian/Muslim Theology", in *Islamochristiana* 3 (1977), pp. 2-3.

18. In this context it is interesting to note the remark made by Ali MERAD to the effect that current reflection in the field of Christology opens up new perspectives for Christian-Muslim dialogue; cf. *Islamochristiana* 1 (1975), p. 6, n. 10.

open, is considered to be impossible is confirmed by another text. "They say the All-Merciful has taken to himself a son...the heavens would almost be rent, the earth split, the mountains come crashing down.... It is not fitting for the All-Merciful to take a son" (Q. 19, 88-92). This cry of horror is echoed in the Qur'ān commentary of the great Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: "How can the Christians who claim to love Jesus give him the attributes they do?" So, remarks Roger Arnaldez, dialogue produces painful wounds in the sensibility of both Christians and Muslims, more serious even than dogmatic opposition.¹⁹

Taking this into consideration the best way forward in many cases may be simply to witness to one's own faith, without exploring convergences and divergences. At the second Muslim-Christian Congress of Cordoba, March 1977, which considered the figures of Muḥammad and Jesus, considerable heat was generated when Christians outlined their position on the status of Muḥammad as prophet or their reaction to the Islamic presentation of Jesus. On the other hand simple statements of belief were well received. A Muslim participant commented: "I learnt much about Christians who practise their religion and are competent."²⁰

This leads to a final remark. Dialogue is not an academic exercise. It is a venture of faith. It is not sufficient to trot out dogmatic formulae, however hallowed they may be. Our words must reflect our experience. Thus, for example, if Christians wish to witness to the Trinity, they have to show that it is not just an incomprehensible doctrine but, as Samuel Rayan has said, an experience and a praxis (socio-economical and political, as well as ecclesial), the only safeguard against the dangers of idolatry, absorption and immanence.²¹ If they wish to convey something of their understanding of redemption, they will have to show how the death/resurrection of Jesus is operative in their own daily dying and living. If they wish to share their conviction that the Eucharist is central to the Christian community, they will have to show, as the Qur'ān itself would seem to suggest, that it is a source of peace, a confirmation of the truth of Jesus, and an invitation to bear witness to this truth (cf. Q. 5, 112-113).

19. R. ARNALDEZ, "Dialogue islamo-chrétien et sensibilités religieuses", in *Islamochristiana* 1 (1975), p. 18.

20. Cf. E. GALINDO-AGUILAR, "Muslim-Christian Congress of Cordoba (1977)", in *Islamochristiana* 3 (1977), pp. 207-228. Lahbabi's remarks are to be found on p. 225.

21. See his contribution in Pedro S. DE ACHÚTEGUI, (ed.), "Towards a 'Dialogue of Life': Ecumenism in the Asian Context", Cardinal Bea Studies 4, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Manila, 1976.

If religion can be shown in this way to be an active force in life, we shall have forestalled that ever-recurring objection: Why discuss questions of belief which only divide? Why not concentrate on the practical problems of community relationships? The answer to these questions can be discerned in a recent memorandum put forward by a group of Christians and Muslims who had come together to discuss Faith, Science and Technology:

As Christians and Muslims we looked still more closely at our own traditions to see in the simplicity and frugality and readiness to suffer shown by Jesus and Muḥammad humbling but inspiring correctives to the extravagance and greed which bring suffering to many of our Christian and Muslim nations of today.

The role of suffering and of willingness to suffer, of potential defeat and ultimate victory for persons as they plunge into the present crisis, received considerable attention. We addressed the specific question of the connotations of the Cross for not only person but city, for society and social justice. While Muslims spoke of the potential significance of the Christ figure for their community, Christians spoke of the Qur'ān as reminder to theirs of social covenant, of corporate justice and racial equality.²²

As a conclusion to this paper, which has only touched upon a few of the problems raised for Christian-Muslim dialogue by the figure of Jesus, let me quote once more from the words of Kenneth Cragg:

Dialogue may have temptations into irrelevance and of these we must beware. But, if realist and honest, its theological content is inseparable from its practical liabilities. To know God transcendentally over man, to see man truly under God, is to be within the criteria by which all other issues must be identified and faced. For there are no problems which do not take us into those reaches of our human meaning for their proper resolution.²³

22. Cf. *Islamochristiana* 4 (1978), p. 233.

23. Cf. *Islamochristiana* 3 (1977), p. 10.

Basic Christian Communities in an Islamic Setting

Louis MASCARENHAS, O.F.M.*

ALMOST everywhere in Asia today we hear of seminars and meetings held about the building of Basic Christian Communities. This is an important aspect of Church development today. We are slowly moving from the concept of large anonymous communities to small intensive groups of Christians, where each one is recognized by name, and where around the Word and the Eucharist, Christian life is deepened, leading to an active involvement in the life of the country and nation. However, far too often an important aspect of the Asian situation is forgotten, its Asian-ness, the wisdom of the ancient cultures and religions. Whilst Basic Christian Communities have been born and have grown in a Latin American situation, in countries where the majority of the population is Christian, here in Asia the Church meets a vast majority of peoples whose life and inspiration are derived from their ancient cultures and religions. This is what makes me feel a little sceptical about the use of the term "Basic Christian Communities" in an Asian setting; for I wonder sometimes how relevant the Latin American situation is for the Church in Asia. I am sure we have a common element in our own Third-Worldness; and yet religiously and culturally we are so different. In the recent meeting of Third World Theologians of Asia in Sri Lanka, January 1979,¹ we faced the same problem when talking about the theology of liberation. We were reminded by the Latin American delegates that Asia must find its own theology and its own way. The success of Basic Christian Communities in the Philippines should not be cited as an example, since the Philippines is so largely Catholic and does not really have the experience of other Asian countries with large non-Christian populations.

If we in Pakistan wish to move into the direction of small intensive Christian communities, we must do so within the context of the Muslim world in which we live. The Church is born in this situation

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1. On this meeting see VIDYAJYOTI 1979, pp. 246-260.

and it is sent to this world. For otherwise there is a great danger that in building small Christian communities, we might make our people even more ghettoish and lose an important aspect of Christian life and witness. It is within this context of the Muslim world that the Church has to search for new ways. It is here that it must find new charisms and new ministries.

The Situation in Pakistan

In Pakistan with a population of over 75 millions, the Christian population (Catholic and Protestant) is around 1 million. For the most part the Christian population is rural and poor, at the mercy of the rich landlords. Those who live in the cities and towns are engaged for the most part in sanitary work and are despised by the rest of the population. In such a setting it is really difficult to talk of dialogue, because dialogue presupposes some equality of status. Further, the Christians coming from a Hindu background find it strange and unpleasant to talk with Muslims who to many of them come across as oppressors. On their part Muslims see no reason why they should dialogue with such a small minority community.

In the Church of Pakistan, specially among Catholics, much time and money, and almost all the personnel is directed towards the maintenance of the Christian community, spread over vast areas, scattered over many villages. Maintenance, not mission, characterizes our pastoral policy. Then the limited number of ordained personnel makes it next to impossible to build up anything that might resemble a Eucharistic community. It is a blessing if some villages see a priest more than once a year. Often it might be less. In the cities and towns where the Christians cluster together in *bastis*, a little more attention can be given to them. Still this is a far cry from the ideal of a deeper Christian life. Given the political situation we have at present, the increased Islamicization of life, the continuous emphasis on Islam in the radio, press, T.V., and the Islamic bias in text-books for schools, it is not surprising that our Christian communities do not want to hear of dialogue, still less of accepting the religious values of Islam.

The official Church does speak of the need of breaking through, and of dialogue and respect for one another's religious convictions; but then the Church is so absorbed by its pastoral concerns for its own flock that, in fact, outreach is not one of its priorities. It is true that Christians and Muslims do work together in factories and mills, and that here and there individual Christians take it upon themselves to maintain good relations with Muslims, businessmen, youth, and

even with the *maulvis* and *ulemas*. The Christian Study Centre at Rawalpindi and Loyola Hall at Lahore are well known for their deeper study of Islam, and for their efforts to create more understanding and interest among the Christian people; but these two centres do not really figure in the mainstream of Christian life in Pakistan. In the Major Seminary, a real effort is made to make the students appreciate Islam. There is a course in Islam for almost all the 12 semesters of the Seminary training. At the Franciscan Friary in the city of Karachi, a young *maulvi* conducts retreats and reflections for groups of Muslim students.

In 1975, a National Seminar on Ministries was held at Multan. Originally meant to study the question of the Diaconate, it providentially broadened out to include other forms of ministry, mainly due to a publication by *Pro Mundi Vita* on Pluriform Ministries, which appeared about that time.² The Seminar emphasized the need of recognizing charisms among the laity, and of building intensive groups of Christians around the Bible and the Eucharist. There too the need of Christian communities open to Islam was voiced. Later, in 1979, two renewal courses were organized in Multan and Karachi for all the clergy of Pakistan by the East Asian Pastoral Institute. These four weeks generated a great deal of enthusiasm about establishing Basic Christian Communities in Pakistan. Follow-up programmes were drawn up to bring about greater presbyteral unity; once again the need for mission was stressed, and listening to the laity underlined. The follow-up has been slow. The Diocese of Rawalpindi has moved ahead with the help of the Better World Movement, and has collected a series of meetings where clergy and laity seek together a better understanding of the developments of Vatican II, the meaning of the Church, the importance of prayer groups, bible reflections, etc. However, it is admitted that openness to Islam has remained, very much to the background. Prayer groups and bible sharing groups have developed in the various dioceses, and have served to give people a sense of belonging. Recently the dioceses of Hyderabad and Karachi have had seminars on Basic Christian Communities, organized by two Franciscans from Brazil. The need of sharing responsibility with the laity was stressed again.

Communities in an Islamic Setting

If we look for examples of Christian communities where openness to Islam really plays a role, then we inevitably come to speak of

2. See "New Forms of Ministries in Christian Communities", *Pro Mundi Vita*, n. 50, 1974.

small religious communities like the Little Brothers of Jesus and the Little Sisters of Jesus. Both these communities, specially in Karachi, have succeeded very well in inserting themselves among Muslims in areas which are economically limited. They are treated like honoured guests by the Pathans and Baluchis. The Sisters, in particular, are protected by the Muslim neighbours. The two communities maintain themselves by very ordinary work, and for the rest build up their religious lives around the concept of *présence de l'Église*. There are no Christians in the immediate area in which they live. One of the reasons why they are accepted so well is that they come without any show of power or prestige. This aspect brings out the best in their Muslim neighbours. They have nothing to fear from these religious. The two communities take up their life-experience into their prayers and community reflections around the Word and the Eucharist. This setting also binds the group very closely together.

Another religious community is DARAKHSHAN (Light). This is a small community of young Franciscan students in training. The students are formed into Franciscan life through living and working in a Muslim Housing Society. Since I am involved in this community, I would like to describe it as a way of building up a deeper Christian and religious life within the context of Islam. The setting is very challenging; it helps to deepen the life of the students and brings out the best in them. In describing our style of life and the thrust of our religious life, I would like to emphasize that we are able to do what we are doing precisely because we are small, and so pose no real threat to anyone. However, I long for the day when more communities will move away from their safe Catholic surroundings. Further, we have only been living in this way for the last five years, and I feel we have a long way to go yet. Our experiences and reflections are just initial, as we move on and allow things to happen.

After having taught Mission Theology and History at the Major Seminary for some 12 years, and seeing so few of my students really opening up to Muslims, I decided it would be better for me to move out into Muslim surroundings, to use the experience as my own learning process, and to share my experiences with my students. I began in 1974 together with three Franciscan novices. When I first started I was very afraid. I had no experience whatsoever, and I could recognize how much my early catechism, my early years in safe Catholic surroundings and the fears of my parents had to do with my own fears. What kept me going was a growing conviction that a Church which looks outwards begins to live. My study and teaching of Church History had shown me that the most encouraging periods in

the Church's life were when it went out to various nations and places. The same study had also shown me that when the Church was in distress, renewal and reform came from small intensive Christian groups. The main thrust of my teaching and life came from the commission of Christ: Go (Mt 28, 20); and for me that meant to go to the Muslims. As a student friar I had studied Islam. Later, after my doctoral studies in Mission History, I spent a year studying Arabic and the Qur'an in the Middle East; but I found that for the most part my understanding of Islam was based on books, not on a living contact with Muslims. I had not come very close to them. So, when we started in 1974 in totally unknown surroundings, we just allowed things to happen to us. Slowly our fears disappeared since we were very well received by our neighbours. In fact, much of the encouragement we get for our way of life also comes from our Muslim neighbours who respect us. Once again we come to them without any power or prestige, just as ordinary persons. Till today there has been no objection to our presence, even though we sing and pray aloud in this completely Muslim area.

We live on the third floor of a whole block of flats. This is a new housing complex, all the flats being built the same way, like cement boxes; but we feel we have been able to bring life into them. We have been lucky to get flats for ourselves, since the flats are mostly sold to families and not to bachelors. The families are sensitive to this, since during the day the husbands are often out for work. Here too we have been trusted very much. In fact we have found the setting in our area very healthy; and, living as we are so close to young families, it becomes easier to talk to our students about marriage and family life, and so too about celibacy and respect for women. The mothers of the families in our block come to visit us, they trust their children with us; and we in our turn have been able to arrange outings and picnics for them, since some do not get a chance to go out. The people know I am a priest and that our students are religious students. They appreciate the regularity of our lives and the regularity of our prayers.

When we first came to this area we had no precise plan of action, except that we wanted to be closer to our Muslim people, and to learn from this experience. Opportunities came our way without any special effort on our part. We remember the first incident very well. While playing on the road side, one of the young boys was knocked down by a car. I was away for my classes at the Seminary. Our novices noticed the accident and immediately set to work. They helped the boy, then got in touch with the family. When they heard that the

husband had already left for work, they went along with the mother to the hospital, and saw that proper care was taken of the boy. That was the beginning. We have had a variety of pleasant experiences and surprises ever since. The time of the curfew in 1977 was another beautiful time for us. Whilst parents were getting tired with their children all cooped up at home, we arranged games for some of the children in the compound. We also helped buy provisions and medicines for those who were unable to go out to the market. We were even asked to do night duty in one of the neighbour's houses because the mother was sick in hospital and there was no one to look after the children.

In our assistance to the block we have moved further still. Now we have started giving tuitions, helping the rich and the poor children who sit together for an hour a day at our place. We have come to see how inadequate the education in our schools is, and how irrelevant it all is for the lives of the children in this age. We feel that since we ourselves have received education, we should also be doing something for others. This assistance to children is also our way of supporting the house. The novices and the professed students in our house are made to work and earn something for our own running expenses, or for some particular need outside. We are able at the same time to help the students who come to us to reflect on some of the values which are missing in the education they receive. We are also lucky in that our novices, instead of the daily routine of just polishing the floors, can engage in some home industry — another means of sustenance for the house — whereby they come to understand something of the monotony of life in a factory. We have a contract with some small business. We spend an hour a day making small boxes for toy tea sets. This is a very monotonous work with poor remuneration. Together we have come a long way in earning our living. Having no servants and living from our work brings us closer to the life-style of many families around us. I do believe it is possible to change the life-style of our seminary and religious training if we can go back to smaller groups. In a developing country, to have everything provided by the seminary strikes as luxury.

Our plans develop because we spend quite some time praying and reflecting together. We are quite strict about our times of prayer in the mornings and evenings, and about meals together. These are very valuable moments, which give depth to various ordinary happenings around us. Guests join us for prayer and meals; by sharing with us their life and inspiration, they have often opened for us new possibilities for dialogue, or offered new exposures for our students,

or provided opportunities to stand up for human rights, or to make space for persons in need.

Ours is an open house, in the sense that we do not want to be possessive about what we have. We really have a good house, and we like to share it. The best room is reserved for needy guests, mostly youth who have emotional problems or who need refuge or lodging and have no other place where to go. I counsel with them, but very often the atmosphere of the house and the community itself helps persons find themselves. We could write beautiful stories about the many persons who have lived with us. There is an atmosphere of trust in the house, and the guests are taken into the community. Very often we have gone out and left the house completely to them. Once we even let our house to a Muslim couple whilst our students were out for their pastoral exposures. As easily happens among flat-dwellers, we too have entrusted neighbours with our keys — without ever having to regret it. Maybe this is also because there isn't much to rob from the house, except books! We do have a very good library, which we want to share with the people in the block.

Our living close to Muslims has helped us to become aware of the many things we have in common. In the heart of our hearts we are very much the same: same longing for acceptance, for security, for justice and peace; same aspirations for self and others, especially the children; same feelings about success and failure, birth and death. In fact we have seen that when one goes back to one's cultural roots, walls seem to fall apart and a closeness develops which goes beyond religious beliefs and laws. Poetry and song draw persons together. In common celebrations here, we have witnessed how keenly everyone listened to the songs and poems of our students.

Islam in Our Study and Prayer

Our closeness to Muslims has been further developed by our own study and reflections on Islam. We are in the process of letting ourselves be influenced by the local folklore, poetry, music, the religious songs and hymns, the variety of Islamic prayers. Everything that offends Muslim sensitivities is avoided. Pork and any strong drink are totally absent in our house. We are also slowly developing our home into a centre of Sufi prayer and reflection; we read and study about Sufism, ask Muslims for advice, and see how much we can do. Even though orthodox Islam does not look too positively on Sufism, we do believe it is an aspect of Islamic life in this sub-continent which is there to stay. Since the members of our community come from closed Catholic surroundings and are not used to prayers taken

from Muslim sources, we proceed slowly with this development. A great deal of talking, listening, reflecting is first required for an attitude of openness to Islam to develop. In settings such as ours, animation and motivation are very important factors in the building up of small dynamic Christian communities, open to the world around them.

In our understanding of Islam we are further helped by the Professor of Islam of the Major Seminary, who encourages students to gather information by contacting Muslims. Because of their ideal situation for such kind of learning, our students have fared very well. I myself encourage this very much, so that their knowledge of Islam may not be only from books and Christian sources, but from believing Muslims themselves. This gives their information more credibility.

Another means for building up our religious community is the celebration of Muslim feasts. This is a new experience for us. Whilst in the past we talked about Muslim feasts, we always felt ourselves as outsiders and distant. Now we find we have come very much closer to our Muslim friends. We prepare ourselves mentally and spiritually for the big feasts by reading about them, by asking Muslims about their own feelings about those feasts, by prayer services on the theme of the feasts, by posters and slogans in the house which sharpen our awareness of feasts about to be celebrated. Our experience has been that the more we involve ourselves in those celebrations, the more the Muslims accept us. We do not fast during the whole of Ramzan, but we definitely make it a point to fast on Jumat-ul-Wida, the last Friday of Ramzan; and, as for Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, we observe the fast in the Muslim way, getting up before dawn like our neighbours, having the *sahri* morning meal, and then breaking the fast only in the evening at the sound of *azān*. We do this out of a sense of solidarity, and to experience something of what Muslims experience when they fast. It helps us to look more positively at the fast as well. Eid-ul-Fitr is a beautiful feast and a real celebration for all of us. The children are the first ones to come to wish us, in their new clothes and always with sweets. A little eiddy (festive gift) is eagerly awaited from us. That day we do not have to cook. The families send us a variety of food. At Christmas, even though we have to be out on that day, we celebrate together with the block. As we have a contract with the neighbouring diocese, we lock our house and go as a group to celebrate Christmas in an area where there is no priest. But we make it a point to present a little gift to each family in the block and to contact them when we are back. The feast of Eid-ul-Azha offers us an even greater opportunity. As it has similari-

ties with the Biblical story, it is not at all difficult to enter into the spirit of this feast. I expect that in the years to come we will deepen our understanding of Muslim feasts, and so will be able to insert ourselves still more deeply into the lives of our Muslim neighbours.

This outgoing thrust and the very enjoyable experiences it brings convince us of the need for a close brotherhood and a deep sense of hospitality. There is a strong sense of belonging and the setting gives direction to our lives. The three years that each friar student spends here help him to mature. The experience of living close to each other in the house and the openness of the community to Islam and the world around it are deepened through our reflections on the Scriptures and become a kind of catechesis. Every evening one of us prepares the prayer service; we do this in turns. We may use the evening prayer of the Breviary, or we may have extended moments of silence; but there is always an experience in the house or around it which serves as a point of focus. Despite our limited field of experience we find for this plenty of variety. So too with the readings in the Eucharistic Liturgy. The first readings are prepared by the students in turns. They are not only helped to read and proclaim the Word, but also to let the Word speak to them. The Gospel is commented on by me. On Sunday mornings we spend more time together in a shared reflection on the Gospel of the day. Once a month we have a longer reflection on the Scriptures. Desert experiences, spending time alone, joining with other religious communities for Scripture sharing — all these help to reinforce the basic experience of our calling in this Muslim setting.

And yet, as regards prayer we feel we are still a long way off from anything that might be called genuinely oriental or Islamic. We need time to assimilate; and more contacts with Islamic mystics and with scholars for guidance. We need time also to assimilate our own Christian tradition. There is, however, a growing atmosphere of listening, and we hope this will help us develop a style of prayer which will assimilate the best of our oriental traditions. Meanwhile I feel it is already an important step to be able to relate the experience of daily life and our contacts with Muslims to our reflections on the Word and our celebration of the Eucharist. Definitely our prayers are very ordinary, and yet at times quite deep.

We try to continue the same kind of reflection on experience and the discovery of God in the theological-pastoral education of our friar students. The inductive method of theology is followed wherever possible. There is the danger that the academic standards may go down; we supplement this by insisting that the students spend at least

three hours a day in intensive reading. The students do need a broadening of their minds, coming as they do from small towns and villages, and plenty of information; but we have learned that when students are given information based on their own interests and discoveries or related to their own experience, assimilation takes place more quickly. However, due to the limited number of professors available, we have not been able to follow this throughout.

Whilst we are grateful for the way we are received and accepted by our Muslim neighbours, we also believe that we too have a positive influence on their families. Our presence here, our witness, our dedication to the life we have chosen does have its impact on our surroundings. I also believe that we are a blessing to them. Parents do come and ask us to pray for them or for their children, and we do pray very regularly for our neighbours. This is something that comes quite naturally to us because of the surroundings in which we live, and we do not have to remind ourselves that we must be a Church for others. All this deepens our lives and fills us with a sense of mission. Even though all of us are so much part of a ghetto Church, I do believe we have been able to make a breakthrough. Our community remains small, from four to eight members, but the experiences have been so fulfilling that I wonder why so few dare to make mission the starting point of religious formation. I do believe religious communities and Basic Christian Communities will grow and mature if from the very beginning they open up to mission.

Looking towards the Future

The question is sometimes put to me: Has this way of formation produced anything? Have the students really responded to it? Is it more than a thin covering or veneer? It is difficult to answer these questions fully at this stage. We only have five years of experience; but I do believe that our students have experienced something which has enriched their lives, and that one day it will bear fruit. It is true the Christian groups we are dealing with are very young, and often the only form of pastoral ministry they have known is that presented by the touring foreign missionary. Even though the number of Pakistani personnel has increased, the set-up of our Church still remains quite traditional. Will our friars move into something new, or will they fall back and copy the pattern set before them by the Church at large? Many of our young priests have indeed fallen back on old patterns. This is due to many reasons, but mainly because, after formation, there is no atmosphere to support the students in the new things they have learned. Formation can never take place in a

vacuum; so there is need for corresponding changes to take place in the Church at large and in religious communities if the new formation programmes are to bear fruit. This is why we are already planning follow-up programmes and new forms of apostolic life.

Formation in a setting such as ours does demand a great deal of giving. I do believe that as formator I have gone through a radical conversion, but I enjoy what the students do to me and what I do to them. Close living of staff and students in a family atmosphere and in an Islamic setting gives our life a certain intensity and purposefulness. We need to develop more groups of this type, small and vulnerable, who consider themselves as guests among their Muslim hosts, listen to the Spirit who speaks to us in our surroundings, and then allow things to happen. Such groups will have beautiful stories to tell, for they will become good-news to people.

Notes

RECENT STUDIES IN NASCENT ISLAM

Muhammad and Jesus

Commonly Accepted Positions

A central concern of the theological dialogue between the adherents of the three great monotheistic religions is a deeper and more adequate understanding of one another's Scriptures, the Bible and the Quran. One way of initiating a dialogue in this area is to concentrate exegetically on figures that hold an important place in both Bible and Quran, as, for instance, Abraham/Ibrahim, Moses/Mūsā, Mary/Maryam and Jesus/ʿIsā.

Over the past two or three decades a good number of books and articles have been written on Jesus as depicted in the Quran.¹ The approach generally adopted has been to select and examine relevant passages of the Quran in an attempt to present a coherent picture of the life, teaching and nature of ʿIsā ibn Maryam. Comparisons with the Jews of New Testament times figure in most of these writings, more or less explicitly.

Among earlier works Heikki Räisänen's exegetical study of the quranic portrait of Jesus (1971) excels in depth and precision. His weighty conclusions may be summarized thus:

(1) Without any doubt the Quran honours ʿIsā greatly. Whereas it criticizes the Christians in various passages, not a single negative word is said about the Messiah. ʿIsā is in no way held responsible for his followers having made him and his mother gods.

(2) However, the importance given to ʿIsā must not be overestimated! The Quran does make unique statements regarding ʿIsā's birth and elevation to heaven, his miracles and titles. Yet, all these fit neatly into the overall theological framework, that is, above all, the uncompromising monotheism of the Quran.

(3) One can doubt whether the Quran puts ʿIsā really highest among the prophets. On the basis of a quantitative analysis one

1. Cf. Don WISMER, *The Islamic Jesus: An Annotated Bibliography of Sources in English and French*, New York: Garland Publ., 1977. As the title indicates, this work does not confine itself to the quranic Jesus. Some of the more important books on the subject are: Henri MICHAUD, *Jésus selon le Coran*, Neuchâtel (Suisse): Delachaux et Niestlé, 1960 (Cahiers Théologiques, 46); Geoffrey PARRINDER, *Jesus in the Quran*, 1st ed., London: Faber and Faber, 1965 (rpt. London: Sheldon Press, 1976); Heikki RÄISÄNEN, *Das Koranische Jesusbild. Ein Beitrag zur Theologie des Korans*, Helsinki: Missiologian Ja Ekumeniken, Seura R.Y., 1971. Also contain important chapters on the subject e.g.: Olaf A. SCHUMANN, *Der Christus der Muslime. Christologische Aspekte in der Arabisch-Islamischen Literatur*, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1975; and, for a wider readership, in India, Ernest HAHN, *Jesus in Islam: A Christian View*, Nagercoil, T. N.: I.E.L.C. Board for Literature, 1975.

would rather conclude that the Quran is interested predominantly in Mūsā and Ibrāhīm. Whereas Mūsā is mentioned in thirty-six suras and five hundred verses and Ibrāhīm in twenty-five suras and two hundred and forty-five verses, ʿIsā is mentioned in only fourteen suras and about ninety verses.

(4) No doubt, ʿIsā is characterized by a few traits without parallel in the other prophetic stories of the Quran, e.g. his birth and his 'elevation' to heaven, the kind of miracles he works. . . . However, Mūsā, for instance, too, works unique miracles. In any case, the Quran gives more importance to the factors which are common to the life and function of all the prophets than to those distinguishing one from the other. The strictly monotheistic message of all the prophets remains totally unchanged throughout. Each prophet adduces 'clear proofs' and 'signs', even if there are variations in detail. All prophets are models in godliness. All of them have been, in one way or the other, in the same position as the last Prophet. Their message, their trials, their activities point to and prefigure Muhammad's life and career. In this ʿIsā is no exception. He, too, is a predecessor of Muhammad.

As Räsänen puts it: Muhammad has in fact interpreted the life of ʿIsā on the basis of and through his own life experiences and his own responses to it. Thus Muhammad's life experience becomes as it were the yardstick by which he measures the past. If ʿIsā nevertheless holds a special place among the prophets, it is because he happens to be the closest predecessor of Muhammad, the one who expressly predicts his appearance (Q. 61, 6). ʿIsā points to someone who is more important and greater than he himself.

Already Räsänen suggested — in the epilogue to his work — that in the light of contemporary biblical research, instead of contrasting the Christology of the Quran with one, supposedly homogeneous, biblical 'picture' of Jesus, one should differentiate between the Christologies of various new-testamental writings. The preexistent Christ and Saviour of the Pauline writings and the eternal Logos of John's Gospel are indeed quite different from the ʿIsā of the Quran. The Christology of Luke, on the other hand, does lend itself in many ways to a tentative structural comparison with the quranic Christology. In Räsänen's view the basic differences between these two Christologies do not concern the essence of Jesus but rather the respective concepts of history and also the view of the problem of suffering. Naturally, differences in these two areas, in turn, influence the overall 'picture' of Jesus in Luke's Gospel and in the Quran.

Claus Schedl's General Approach and Method

Claus Schedl in his recent monumental work on Muhammad and Jesus² vigorously takes up a further suggestion made by Räsänen.

2. Claus SCHEDL, *Muhammad und Jesus. Die Christologisch relevanten Texte des Koran neu übersetzt und erklärt*. Wien: Herder, 1978. Pp. 583. Claus Schedl, qualified in Semitic and biblical studies, is at present professor of biblical theology at the University of Graz (Austria).

Instead of simply putting together the various traits of Jesus by way of the phenomenological methods, one might gain new insights by inquiring into the motivating forces which have contributed to shape the quranic portrait of Jesus. This then leads to an enquiry into the motives and tendencies at work in the shaping of the biblical tradition.

Schedl's method consists in (1) analysing whole relevant suras — not just isolated verses, and in (2) keeping throughout close to the text, leaving aside the post-quranic developments of the image of Jesus. Schedl wants to make a deliberate effort to enter the world of Semitic religious thought. He scrupulously avoids imposing the thought-patterns of the Greek culture of Catholic-conciliar Christianity on the mental world of the Quran. This, he alleges, has been the mistake made again and again since the days of the first outstanding Christian apologist vis-à-vis Islam, John of Damascus (d. 749 A.D.).

A prominent feature of Schedl's work is his consistent application to the exegesis of the Quran of the so-called 'logotechnical' method. He has developed and tested this method in various previous studies in the field of biblical and of Syrian Christian literature.³ He applies this method here — probably for the first time — on a grand scale to the Quran. The logotechnical method represents a highly elaborate theory of 'number symbolism'. The symbolic use of numbers is located through word, and sometimes letter, count. Schedl analyses the suras by dividing them into 'narrative', 'introduction' to direct speech' and 'direct speech'. As would be the case with biblical texts, so here too Schedl maintains that the suras of the Quran are comprehensively composed and structured, according to certain numbers indicating structures (*Strukturzahlen*), to 'houses' or models (evolved in his earlier works). They are listed at the end of the present work (cf. pp. 579f.) and count no less than twenty-six.

We cannot enter here into a detailed explanation or even critical examination of the author's 'logotechnical' method, into an assessment of its merits and its defects. Competent reviewers of his earlier works, in biblical exegesis, have done so. On the whole his 'logotechnical' analyses have met with a good deal of scepticism, although they have not been rejected out of hand. The great number of 'models' employed, their combined application and the numerous exceptions and variations allowed for by the author in the actual counting of words, make one wonder about the stringency of his conclusions. At the same time the results achieved by the method so carefully employed by Schedl do not fail to impress.

It hardly needs mentioning that Schedl's theory implies a radical transformation of the traditionally held view of Muhammad and the manner he received and communicated divine revelation. Muhammad emerges in Schedl's work as a master-builder of the word. Should the logotechnical analyses of the author withstand scholarly criticism, be it only in part, the momentous conclusion would impose itself that

3. See among his many other publications esp.: *History of the Old Testament*, 5 vols, Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1973; *Bauplane des Wortes. Einführung in die biblische Logotechnik*, Freiburg: Herder, 1974.

Muhammad, in the linguistic formation of the quranic revelation owes more to early Jewish-Christian biblical scholarship than to the poetical art of the ancient Arabs. Schedl is convinced that the logotechnical tradition played an important role in the literary creation of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. Since Muhammad undoubtedly wanted his new Scripture, that is the Quran, to be received as confirmation and fulfilment of the previous Scriptures, he would naturally employ and as far as possible, perfect the logotechnical method. In whatever way then we may react to Schedl's intensive use of number symbolism, the results of his diligent and original text analyses certainly merit close attention.

Muhammad's Prophetic Experience

Before presenting Muhammad's Christology in the Meccan and Medinan periods,⁴ Schedl discusses his prophetic vocation. What kind of experience was his receiving of the divine call? The relevant texts of the Quran⁵ do not portray a visionary or a recipient of auditory hallucinations, but rather a preacher of repentance who is totally taken up by the belief in the One and Unique God and his imminent Judgement. Muhammad's experience has to be qualified as typically and truly religious, essentially an experience of awakening and conversion, a breaking through of a clear perception of faith in the One and Only God who previously had revealed himself in Judaism and Christianity. Schedl holds the controversial view that Muhammad was more profoundly influenced by Christianity than by the Jewish faith. He goes so far as to state: "One could call Muhammad a convert to Christianity, a Christianity of a kind to be defined subsequently in detail. . ." (p. 163). This 'breaking through' can be seen as the fruit of Muhammad's earnest search and prayer.

In Muhammad's experience the finding of God goes together with his consciousness of having been sent (*rasūl*), a consciousness most succinctly expressed in the short Muslim profession of faith (*shahādah*): 'There is no god but God, and Muhammad is His messenger!' His mandate was to preach pure monotheism to the pagan Arabs as it was Paul's mandate — if the comparison may be allowed — to address the Hellenists and Peter's mandate the Jews.

Schedl, being a seasoned Bible exegete, approaches the Quran with the attitude and the tools of a Bible scholar. His belief in the inspiration of Muhammad goes together with the conviction that the characteristic features of Muhammad's personality play their role in the revelatory event and can and must be elaborated by the exegete. As a result of his analyses of early suras, Schedl concludes that we must abandon the slightly romantic view of Muhammad uttering the suras forth ecstatically. No, "he worked at the formation and structuring of his dicta until he could release them as a perfect work of art" (p. 166). Thus emerges a completely new image of Muhammad the

4. The suras of the Quran are grouped into the Meccan ones (revealed between 610 and 622 A.D.) and the Medinan ones (revealed between 622 and 632 A.D.)

5. This part is based on Schedl's analysis of the following suras: 96; 68; 73; 74; 1; 97; 83; 55.

literary artist and scholar. Yet: Muhammad's foundational experience is religious and as such permeates all his later actions and words.

Muhammad's Christology at Mecca

Schedl has chosen seven Meccan suras (19; 6; 42; 43; 21; 23) for close analysis. He sees them, in the order given here, as it were as seven acts of Muhammad's personal wrestling with the question: 'Who is 'Isā ibn Maryam?' The climax is reached with Q. 43, 81: 'If the All-merciful has a son, then I am the first to serve him!' This verse is contrasted by the statement in Q. 19, 89-90: 'You have indeed advanced something hideous! The heavens are wellnigh rent of it and the earth split asunder, and the mountains wellnigh fall down crushing for that they have attributed to the All-merciful a son.' The Quran thus shows that the Christ-question was central to Muhammad and stirred the depths of his soul.

Instead of entering into a systematic discussion of the manifold picture of the Jesus of Christianity, the Quran concentrates on highlighting those few aspects which it holds to be decisive. Thus the strikingly fragmentary character of the quranic picture of Christ becomes understandable. It may help to recall in this context how little we learn from the writings of Paul about the details of the life of the historical Jesus.

The 'infancy gospel' of the Quran in sura 19 breathes the spirit of the Christian gospels. Schedl views Q. 19, 16-21 as a free imitation of the Lukan annunciation narrative (Lk 1, 26-38), formed under the palpable influence of the apocryphal gospels. In both accounts, that of Luke and that of the Quran, the dialogue is conducted not directly between God/Allah and Mary/Maryam but, indirectly, by the mediation of the announcing angel. The frequent WE of the Quran, according to Schedl, very often refers to the angel or angels. In Q. 19, 17 for instance ('Then WE sent unto her our Spirit that presented himself to her, a man without fault'), the angel-spirit is announcer. Yet, he does not work the miracle of the conception as in Luke. Allah alone can create life. Thus the spirit-angel refers to Allah himself (Q. 19, 21: 'Even so thy Lord has said'). 'Isā is miraculously conceived and born through the commanding, creative Word of Allah (Q. 19, 35). He is therefore 'Word of God' only insofar as he has come into existence through the commanding word of Allah. The miracle consists in this extraordinary, creative act of God. 'Word of God' (*kalimah min Allah*), as applied to 'Isā in the Quran, is not identical in meaning with 'Word of God' in the Gospel and therefore cannot be linked with the Logos-Christology developed there.

Whereas the apostolic creed says: 'Conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary', one would have to formulate quranically: 'Conceived through the creative Word of Allah alone, born from Maryam, the Virgin'. Islamic and Christian faith agree, however, in that they profess Jesus/'Isā a (miraculous) sign of God (for men),⁶

6. See M. FIZGERALD's article above in this issue.

and thus assign him a unique position within the total history of mankind, from Adam onwards to the last judgement.

The Meccan suras nowhere use the term *ibn* (son) but rather the term *walad* (child or, collectively, children) and, in this context, the verb *akhadha* (to take to himself). The relevant passages (cf. e.g. 19, 35; 19, 18ff; etc.) all deal primarily with the unicity of Allah, not with divine sonship. The unicity of Allah would be affected by attributing to him a child and with the child, by implication, as the Quran reflects, a female partner, a spouse: 'The Creator of the heavens and the earth — how should He have a son, seeing that He has no consort (*ṣāhibah*)' (Q. 6, 101). 'He has not taken to Himself either consort or child (or: children)' (Q. 72, 3). Muhammad's first and foremost concern was the defence of pure monotheism. To attribute to Allah a 'son' would have meant falling back into a polytheistic outlook. The rejection of the 'divine sonship' of 'Isā does not really affect the original Christian belief statement. In the rejection of the heathen gods and in the single-minded struggle for pure monotheism there was no room for the Christian belief in the sonship of Jesus as Muhammad perceived it. What the Christians professed concerning 'Isā, appeared to Muhammad similar to the old, powerful Arab idolatry. Muhammad wanted to preserve 'Isā, too, from being idolized.

Thus Muhammad concentrated all his energy on the servant-of-God Christology. 'Isā's first word, when emerging from the womb of his mother, is: 'Lo, I am God's servant' (Q. 19, 31). With this word is summarized the only possible attitude towards Allah: total surrender. 'Isā personifies and fulfils the basic ideal of Islam (cf. Q. 43, 61.64). 'Isā definitely is not 'son' but servant (Q. 43, 59). In stressing the servanthood of 'Isā/Jesus the Quran is indeed not alone. The preaching of the primitive Church as reflected in the gospels and, especially, in the Acts, took up the songs of the servant of Isaiah (cf. Mt 3, 17; Act 2, 22). However, the early Church's preaching advanced from the 'servant' to the 'son'-statements and the title 'son' there appears in a light radically different from the quranic context. Therefore, Schedl suggests, in order to tackle the questions posed in the context of dialogue "one would have on the one hand to agree with Muhammad's defensive battle; on the other hand, one would have to take into account the early Christian kerygma and its exact purport and development. . ." (p. 334). A great task for the Christian-Muslim dialogue!²

Muhammad's Christology at Medina

The Christology of the Meccan period is maintained in Medina. However, we perceive a few emphases. Whereas in Mecca Muhammad defends his monotheistic faith, above all, against polytheism, in Medina he opposes the idea of saints given, as he saw it, to God as companions.⁷

7. This part is based on the translation and analysis of the following suras: 2; 3; 33; 4; 57; 66; 61; 5; 9.

Speaking about this kind of 'associating' he uses the term *sharaka* which, according to the Schedl, would be the Arabic equivalent of the Greek theoretical term *homoousios* (equal in essence). Muhammad opposes the idea of a triad in God. He understood it in fact to mean that besides Allah two more 'gods' would be held to coexist, namely ʿĪsā and Maryam. The correction of this false triad in God is stated in Q. 4, 117: 'And say not as to Allah but the truth! The Messiah, ʿĪsā, son of Maryam, was only the messenger of Allah, his Word that He committed to Maryam, and Spirit from Him. . . and say not, 'Three', Refrain; better it is for you to say: God is only One God. . . a child (*walad*) He has not.'

It follows that whereas Muhammad certainly opposed the idea of a triad or plurality in God he did not oppose the correctly perceived Christian idea of the Trinity. He rejected simply the fact of associating with the One God some 'children'. Arabia was at that time the refuge of various Christian heresies. When Muhammad rejects the current (false) ideas of the Trinity he is actually in agreement with the Church of the Councils. Yet, from Muhammad's way of defending his position, we must conclude that he did not comprehend properly and in all its depth the mystery expressed by the teaching of inner-divine processions.

From Muhammad's perspective, the title 'son of God', applied to ʿĪsā, the son of Maryam, appeared highly misleading and of no use because it would destroy the belief in the One God. By qualifying Jesus — in the context of Muslim-Christian dialogue — as 'son of God', one does evoke in the Muslim mind ideas that have nothing to do with the reality of the 'son of God' of the New Testament writings.

As in the Meccan so in the Medinan suras the title *ʿabd Allah* expresses most properly the nature of ʿĪsā, son of Maryam. How then does the quranic *ʿabd Allah* compare with the *ʿebed Yahweh* of Isaiah (Is. 42, 1-4; 49, 1-6; 50, 4-8; 52, 13-53, 12)? The biblical servant of Yahweh has much similarity with that of the Quran: he has an open ear for God's command, is obedient and patient and does not deviate from his path in spite of the manifold sufferings he has to meet as a prophet (*nabi*) and messenger (*rasūl*) of Allah. Contradiction, persecution and even being killed belong to the mission of the *ʿabd Allah*.

But does the Quran not flatly deny the crucifixion of ʿĪsā? Q. 4, 157 says: 'They (the Jews) did not slay him, neither did they crucify him. Only a likeness of that was shown to them.' Schedl regards this verse as part of a unit (Q. 4, 153-159) which he entitles: Religious Discussion with the Jews. It is to be viewed as a challenging statement, coined in polemical language against the Jews, shortly before the consequential battle of Badr in 624 A.D. The Jews are made to say proudly: 'We have killed ʿĪsā, the son of Maryam, the *rasūl* of Allah! Muhammad's reply is: They have not killed *him*, nor crucified *him*!'

Obviously, Schedl insists, Muhammad could not have reasonably denied a fact well known to the whole civilized world! The emphasis

is therefore not laid upon the denial of the fact of ʿĪsā's crucifixion, but rather on the false interpretation given by the Jews to their statement. Both, the Jews and Muhammad use the verb 'to kill' (*qatala*) but understand it differently. The difference arises because of the different concept concerning the person of the Crucified. The Jews in this passage are portrayed as regarding ʿĪsā as a mere human who because of blasphemy had been condemned to death. Muhammad, in contrast, confesses ʿĪsā a *rasūl Allāh*, saved. He cannot be destroyed even by death. ʿĪsā lives with God.

Schedl tries to strengthen this argument by adducing contemporary gnostic sources, especially the apocalypse of St Peter of the Nag Hammadi texts. Q. 4. 157, read in the light of this gnostic literature, would go to show that the crucifixion of the man ʿĪsā has — for Muhammad — no salvific function; it dwindles into an almost insignificant phenomenon of secondary importance. Really important for Muhammad is solely the fact of the exaltation of the 'servant' by God. The Jews intend to destroy the servant of Allāh on the cross, yet Allāh has 'exalted' his servant on the cross.

Conclusion

One may well remain sceptical vis-à-vis such hypothesis of the author as the one reported just now. Yet Schedl's original study has, to say the least, the merit of showing us how fruitful a diligent and unprejudiced study of the quranic texts turns out to be for the dialogue with Muslims. When meditated upon and studied deeply, the words of the Quran and of the Bible can suddenly make us discover common aspects and approaches, hitherto hidden. One of the most fascinating aspects of Claus Schedl's work is the impressive manner in which is highlighted in it the servant-of-God Christology of the Quran — a Christology which is found, in a fragmentary way, in the Acts as well. The Hellenist Church of the West did not further elaborate this particular line of theology. For the Syrian-Semitic Christianity of the East, the contrast, the designation of Jesus as servant/*ʿabd* seems to have been the dominant christological theme. If, therefore, Muhammad puts this title into the centre of his preaching about ʿĪsā, he thereby takes up an early Christian concept and purifies it from contemporary misinterpretations. Yet the fact that Muhammad did not elaborate precise ontological concepts — in the spirit of Hellenistic-Western thought — should not mislead us into assuming that he had only a very rudimentary acquaintance with Christianity. And the author concludes his study thus:

True, Muhammad does not discuss in the Quran the dogmatic elaborations of the Councils of the Hellenistic-Western Church. Yet the overall picture which we have gained from our inquiries should demonstrate that Muhammad knew the basic structure of the Syrian-Semitic Christology very well and that he developed it further with originality and in an independent spirit. In order to be fruitful, the Muslim-Christian dialogue (on a scholarly level) must start from these fundamental data. To this end we have produced a fresh translation and detailed commentary of the christologically relevant texts of the Quran (p. 566).

Muhammad and the Jews

Muhammad's relationship with the Jews of Medina, as depicted by critical historiography, has come to be viewed as a black spot in his character. The eviction of the two Medinan tribes, the Banu Nadir and the Banu Qainuqa, and especially the alleged mass execution of several hundred members of the third Jewish tribe there, the Banu Quraiza, as reported by Ibn Hisham (d. 833/218) in his classical biography of the Prophet, has again and again been adduced as a clear proof of Muhammad's enmity towards, if not hatred and contempt of, the Jews in general. This discussion surely is of more than academic interest. In one way or another it has to do with one of the major persistent political conflicts of our century.

The historians have taken the view that when the Apostle left Mecca (Hijra of 622 A.D.), he looked forward to his acceptance by the three Jewish tribes of Medina (then still called Yathrib). On his arrival he tried to win them over by adopting Jewish religious rites like the fast of Ashura and the turning towards Jerusalem for liturgical prayer. However, soon disappointed by the Jewish rejection, he broke with them and crushed them.

A recent study by Barakat Ahmad reexamines the entire question.¹ He argues that the traditional picture represents a distorted reflection of events. Dismissing in an elaborate discussion Ibn Hisham's account and basing his argument mainly on the Meccan suras 17, 4-11 and 10, 93, he states that the Apostle knew well before his arrival in Medina that he would be rejected and yet offered the terms of the *Sahifah* (the pact with the Jews) on the sole basis of the common confession of God's Unity (*tauhid*). This pact, according to the author, erroneously called 'The Constitution of Medina', was not signed immediately after his arrival in Medina but only towards the concluding period of the Apostle's life. It lays down the guiding principles for building a multi-cultural and multi-religious *ummah* and thus is a very important document for the understanding of the status of non-Muslims in a Muslim-dominated society. Its basis, Barakat Ahmad insists, was neither territorial nor tribal. Under its terms, the Jews were not required to pay any tax and there was no explicit clause demanding their subjection.

However, Muhammad did not live long after the conquest of Mecca and the signing of the *Sahifah*. With his death this pact and the kind of *ummah* created by it, as well as the Jews who were part of it, passed out of the picture. Now the term *ummah* acquired a new definition, the one familiar to us, evolved in the context of the *Shariah* which, as is well known, did not derive solely and directly from the Quran. In the *Shariah* the status of non-Muslim monotheists was defined as that of "protected ones" (*dhimmis*), with special privileges and duties, for instance the payment of the special poll-tax (*jizyah*).

1. Barakat AHMAD, *Muhammad and the Jews: A Re-examination*. New Delhi: Vikas, 1979. Pp. x-140. Rs 75.

Barakat Ahmad sees the confrontation between the Jewish population and the Muslims in Medina under Muhammad's leadership as determined by social, political and economic rather than merely religious factors. Decisive was the fact that the Muslims in Medina were trying to take over the oases from the Jews. The *muhajirum*, that is, those Muslims who had emigrated with Muhammad from Mecca, posed a danger to the Jewish tribes by their superior business acumen. The Jewish farmer and landowner in and around Medina was threatened by the merchant. Not only his social values but his prosperity was faced with danger from the new merchant class. In other words, Barakat Ahmad highlights the socio-economic nature of the Muslim-Jewish conflict in Medina. At the same time he endeavours to prove the restricted, limited nature of the conflict between Muhammad and the Jews. Muhammad's and the Muslims' encounter with the Jewish tribes in Medina "was a local affair. It was not an encounter between the two religions" (p. 122). The "ghetto-mindedness" of the Jews of the Hijaz, their economic self-interest and their pride as a declining elite group prevented them "from accepting the invitation to join the *ummah*" (p. 124).

With this Barakat Ahmad contrasts the encounter between Islam and the Jewish religion. This began much earlier, in Mecca, where there were no Jews. It reached its highest point under the Abbasids in the Eastern Caliphate and under the Umayyads in Spain, periods of "the great Jewish-Muslim symbiosis during the golden period of Islam" (p. 123).

Barakat Ahmad's depiction of Muhammad's encounter with the Jews bears the marks of a tentative hypothesis. It relies on questionable assumptions. We cannot be totally sure of the authenticity and chronology of the *Sahifah* and, with it, of the assumption that Muhammad worked out and even implemented the concept of a wider *ummah*, embracing all monotheists and without discriminatory taxes. In the same way one may legitimately question the complete rejection by the author, of the earliest biographers' version of the events as highly biased and exaggerated.

We would nevertheless agree with the author on a number of important points. The Jews of Medina were fought by Muhammad in battles and expelled, not because of their faith, but rather because they formed within the *ummah* of Medina closed groups which could become dangerous for Muhammad, especially when he was menaced by danger from outside, e.g. from Mecca before its subjection. Also, Muhammad's actions concerned only the three Medinan tribes, not Jewery in Arabia as a whole. Finally, the massacre of the Banu Quraiza may well have been less bloody than depicted by Ibn Hisham and, in any case, it obviously is not to be judged by the standards, say, of the Convention of Geneva. The customs of conduct of war then were more brutal. Muhammad has to be measured by the criteria of his own time and milieu. It may sound strange: In public opinion, then, Muhammad became guilty by cutting down a number of palm-trees of the Banu Nadir when besieging them (cf. Q. 59, 5), but not by having killed the five hundred or so men of the Banu Quraiza. Earlier these

had surrendered unconditionally to him together with the other two Jewish tribes, and they now had broken their pledge. In the eyes of their contemporaries, they had forfeited their right to survive. The cutting down of the palm-trees of the besieged Banu Nadir, in contrast, constituted a breach of customary Arab law on the part of the Prophet (cf. Q. 59, 5).

However, the real problem, it would seem to us, lies not so much in Muhammad's biography as in the substantial quranic passages concerning the Jews or "the Children of Israel", as the Quran frequently denotes them. Not a few of these are outspokenly critical of the Jews and lend themselves easily to fuelling in the believing listener anti-Jewish sentiment.

The Quran not only accuses the Jews of not accepting the "message of God and His Apostle". It counter-attacks. The Jews of Medina are the worthy descendants of their ancestors, the Children of Israel: unbelieving and ungrateful to God who has favoured them again and again with special blessings (cf. e.g. Q. 2, 40ff; 5, 7-26; 4, 155ff). They have broken the covenant, have revolted against Moses, adored idols and killed one another. More, they have killed the prophets, have not believed in Jesus, even set out to crucify him, and they have spoken calumnies against Mary his mother. In short, they were disobedient, transgressors of divine injunctions. They were of hard and uncircumcised hearts.

Their descendants, the Jews of Medina, are no better. They are avaricious, usurers, eating up the goods of the people. They have watered down the true monotheistic faith by saying that Uzair (Esdras?) is son of God and by believing in the idols Jibt and Taghut and taking their rabbis as Lords (Q. 9, 30-31). They are hypocrites, professing outwardly belief in the Quran without truly accepting it in their heart (Q. 2, 76; 5, 61). They listen to the lies of the unbelievers and align themselves with them secretly in order to betray the Prophet (Q. 5, 80; 58, 14). They refuse to inform the Prophet about their Scriptures (Q. 2, 76), hold back what they know (Q. 2, 42) and give him false information (Q. 2, 78), and then make fun of his errors (Q. 5, 57f.).

Since they refuse to submit to Muhammad, their God-sent arbiter, or to accept the Quran as the sole absolute criterion of truth and falsehood, their religion and community are condemned and merit divine wrath (Q. 5, 13.60). Because of their refusal to believe in Allah and the Last Day as preached by the Quran, they must be fought "until they pay the Tribute readily, being brought low" (Q. 9, 29).

Barakat Ahmad does not deal in any way with these passages of the Quran. His silence seems to imply that these pose no theological problem, once we accept the main thesis of his book. They would simply lay open and qualify the unbelief of the Old Testament Jews and of the Jews of Medina respectively. They would not reflect on the Jews and their religion, as such.

However, it can hardly be denied that these passages of the Quran, in practice, have been and continue to be applied to the Jews collectively. They thus have contributed shaping the attitude of many

Muslims towards the Jews. Even in serious works of Muslim scholarship on the Quran one finds again and again a subtle gliding from applying passages as those quoted above to distinct groups of Jews in the past to applying them to Jews in general, taking them to be a statement on the Jews of all times and places.² The problem is not unknown to those familiar with the question of the so-called anti-Semitism of New Testament passages and their exegesis throughout the centuries.

Today in various parts of the world a tri-lateral dialogue of the "religions of Abraham" is being initiated.³ Political events have furthermore led recently to a reconciliation of parts of the Muslim world with the Jewish State of Israel. In this context, how do Muslim scholars and believers who are involved in these and other comparable developments, read the "anti-Jewish" passages of the Quran? Can the Quran be interpreted in such a way as to justify and buttress a bilateral Muslim-Jewish and trilateral Jewish-Christian-Muslim ecumenism of those belonging to the 'family of Abraham'? Also, what are the theological implications of such an ecumenical reading with regard to evolving new Muslim concepts of revelation, inspiration and of the historicity of the Quran, the eternal message of God to the believers, in time?

This exceptionally well-produced book of Barakat Ahmad should help clearing the ground for an ecumenical consideration of such questions.

Christian W. TROLL, S.J.

GUIDELINES FOR MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

The K.C.M. Press, Cochin, Kerala, has given us an Indian edition of the *Guidelines for a Dialogue between Muslims and Christians*, published by the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians in 1969. Unfortunately the original work received very little notice in India, probably reflecting the Church's scant interest in the topic at that time. Indeed, it was only in October, 1973, during the All-India Consultation held in Patna, that a workshop first spoke out on this topic. This neglect was a pity, for the first chapter of the *Guidelines*, "The Attitude of a Christian Taking Part in Dialogue", merited reading by anybody seriously interested in the whole field of dialogue. The book is mostly the work of two men eminently qualified to speak on the topic, in view of their long and profound contact with Muslims. This is particularly

2. Mazheruddin Siddiqi, *The Quranic Concept of History* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1975), p. 134, as just one example.

3. E.g.: "The Graymoor Papers II. Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dialogue", presented in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, vol. XIV (Summer 1977), n. 3; *Islamochristiana* (Rome), vol. IV (1978), pp. 225-230. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 230-231 and 236-242. *Aspects of Interfaith Dialogue, Yearbook 1975-1976* (Tantur/Jerusalem: Ecumenical Institute for Advanced Theological Studies, 1979). These publications report on tri-lateral dialogue meetings in Germany, Portugal and Israel.

1. *Guidelines for a Dialogue between Muslims and Christians*. Secretariat pro Non-Christians. Indian Edition. Cochin, K.C.M. Press, 1979. Pp. 182. Rs 10.

true with respect to Louis Gardet, not merely a highly respected scholar of Islam, but one who is greatly revered by Muslims from near and far. The co-author of the book, Fr Joseph Cuoq, is the author of the masterly work, *Les Musulmans en Afrique* (1975), and is well-known in French speaking Muslim circles. It might well be argued that the first chapter is the most precious in the whole book precisely because it deals with the more universal aspects of dialogue and the fundamental attitudes necessary for it.

The chapter begins with the point that "dialogue can only take place with people. . . . Dialogue cannot take place between systems of philosophy or between religions" (p. 2). This does not mean that these latter encounters have no meaning, but rather that they have no meaning "apart from facilitating the encounter of minds, by lessening prejudice and eliminating obstacles." What is of prime importance is "the relationship which is established between myself and the other person." The authors assert that "we encounter God himself in the person who is asking us questions and challenging us to reveal what we consider as essential and to express this in new ways" (p. 3). They state frankly that "the one thing that really matters is that our heart should be full of welcome for the other person" (p. 6). Trying to maintain such an attitude in an unfriendly milieu is no easy task!

Absolutely fundamental is the disposition described in these words: "In entering into relations with others my first concern. . . must be to receive rather than to give, to learn rather than to teach, and above all to listen and understand rather than to do all the talking myself" (p. 11). This is very hard to put into practice, especially for a person who has been ordained to preach the Good News to all men! Being himself perfectly convinced of the truth of his own position, the zealous evangelist is all eagerness to communicate his faith in Jesus Christ and feels the impulse to tell his Muslim friend all about it. Deliberately choosing to listen rather than speak may seem a self-defeating position but it will prove far more fruitful, for it is based on an attitude of respect for the other person and a desire to get to know him ever more and more as a prelude to loving him more truly. A person may, in these circumstances, experience the joy of "discovering that our partner really believes" (p. 15).

The other chapters provide many valuable suggestions and information about how a person who is genuinely interested in approaching a Muslim can do so. The final chapter, added by Fr Christian Troll, S.J., for the Indian edition, gives a fine survey, in a few pages, of Indian Muslims. With specific reference to dialogue with Muslims, the last section of this chapter, entitled "Contact with the True Leaders of the Muslim Community", is of special significance. Troll rightly points out that, although it is good to establish contact with English-speaking Muslims, we should not entertain the illusion that we have thereby made contact with Muslim religious leaders in India. The fact is that, until contact is made with the *ulama* — the products of the *madrasas* — and the Shah Sahibs or heads of various Sufi groups, one has not reached the real religious leaders of the Muslim masses. Contact with these is not easy, for English will not serve the purpose: one has to

move into Urdu (at least in the North) and, through Urdu, enter their world, which is a very different one from the one we live in, as any reader of the Urdu press well knows.

The final chapter makes one more point of great importance in the section entitled "Indian Muslims and Inter-Religious Prayer Meetings". It is a well-known fact that there exist in the country centres of dialogue which are in reality, if not in name, centres of Hindu-Christian dialogue, with no place for Islam. The very word "dialogue" indicates the prime importance of the one-to-one encounter, and nobody can possibly take objection to people who, because of background and training, find it easier to engage in dialogue with Hindus than with Muslims. In the Indian context, however, it would be a mistake to engage in dialogue with members of one other religion to the exclusion of those of the other ones. Such exclusivism would be unacceptable, especially in the North; the above-mentioned section gives valuable hints for those occasions, perhaps legitimately rare, when members of various religions gather for prayer and dialogue.

As for the get-up of the book, one would have appreciated a thicker cover; an un-split Table of Contents; a more careful proof-reading of the final chapter and the cover design, for any Muslim will immediately spot a mistake in the Arabic.

In conclusion, I may refer to the *Pro Mundi Vita Bulletin*, n. 14, September-October 1978, which contains an excellent coverage of "The Muslim-Christian Dialogue of the Last Ten Years" on the international level, as well as to the very fine bibliography at the end of the *Guidelines*.

Paul JACKSON, S.J.

Ramakrishna's Americans. (A Report of Intercultural Monasticism). By Charles S.J. WHITE. Delhi, Yugantar Prakashan, 1979. Pp. 106. Rs 35.

This short essay is a sympathetic study of the efforts at inculturation made by Ramakrishna Mission monasticism in the Western hemisphere. Being the earliest and probably the most solidly established Hindu movement in America, the Ramakrishna Mission offers an interesting case for enquiring into the possibilities open to Hindu religious ideals in a new cultural setting. The male branch is shown to keep, more than

the female order, a strong dependence on the Indian parent organization. And perhaps rightly so, if it wants to remain a witness in the West of the specific contribution of Indian spirituality. More than half of the report deals with a general presentation of monasticism and the Ramakrishna Order. In only 34 pages the author describes the six American monasteries of the Order visited by him in summer 1974, and reports conversations that took place then. His balanced and sympathetic account of the movement will interest the general reader.

G. GISPERT-SAUCH, S.J.

Document

Second Bishops' Institute for Inter-Religious Affairs of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences

(Kuala Lumpur, 13-20 November 1979)

S T A T E M E N T

Introduction

1. The participants from the Episcopal Conferences of Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand came together 13-20 November, 1979, at the Residence of the Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur in the Second Bishops' Institute for Inter-Religious Affairs (BIRA II), sponsored by the Office of Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC).

2. The purpose of this colloquium was to deepen our understanding of and commitment to dialogue with Muslims. The intention of our meeting was pastoral. We approached our subject in three steps:

(i) A reading of the situation: reports on the dialogue with Muslims in the various countries represented and the difficulties encountered;

(ii) Theological reflection on the nature and role of dialogue in Christian life;

(iii) Pastoral orientations and specific recommendations.

A Reading of the Situation

3. Since the Second Vatican Council's call for Catholics to dialogue with Muslims, we see a picture of multiple openings and considerable advances, side by side with frustrations and failures. Certain shared attitudes towards life in our modern world have encouraged dialogue between Christians and Muslims.

4. Christians and Muslims share an eagerness to serve the one God, await his judgment and hope in his eternal reward. Both search for true moral values in the midst of a fast-changing world, and endeavour to apply them to the complex demands of daily life. Both are committed to the establishment of a more just and human social order. Christians and Muslims can see one another as servants of God striving to bear witness to his sovereignty and to carry out his Will for men in the midst of modern forms of idolatry (consumerism, egoism) and godlessness (materialism, atheistic ideologies).

5. A further encouragement for dialogue between Christians and Muslims is that both are involved in a religious renewal of their own, by which they hope to realise more deeply the divine message in which they believe. This renewal process may help them overcome the enmity and suspicion that have often existed between them. Christians and Muslims today are challenging themselves to centre their attention on the divine message at the heart of their faith. Those who sincerely seek the will of God should come closer in love to one another.

6. Despite these factors which bring Christians and Muslims closer together, both groups must be aware of negative attitudes and situations which inhibit and present obstacles to dialogue. Predominant among these is fear — fear of a minority group towards a majority, of the politically or economically disadvantaged towards those in the position of strength, fear of being proselytised, as well as nameless and irrational fears based on centuries of strife, prejudice and ignorance of the other's religion.

7. A second factor inhibiting dialogue is a triumphalist attitude still present on both sides. Many Christians and Muslims consider themselves superior to all others and feel that they have nothing to learn from any partners in dialogue. Such an attitude makes impossible any true dialogue, which pre-supposes attitudes of humility, openness and equality as persons, without sacrificing one's religious identity.

8. The political implications of religious questions hinder dialogue in many Asian countries. Islam and Christianity have a genuine interest in influencing every aspect of man's life. Neither of them can ignore the political, economic and social surroundings in which man lives. Only in an atmosphere of mutual trust can the participants in dialogue find the patience and forbearance necessary to continue their exchange in the face of political issues which often arise.

9. In spite of these obstacles, there is a growing awareness on the part of Christians for the necessity of dialogue as an activity intrinsic to the Christian response to God's message.

Theological Reflection

10. From all eternity God has spoken his message to mankind, to make the power of his word rule over the individual and social life of man. This eternal message of God became incarnate in Jesus, who announced the Good News of God's reign in this world.

11. The Church, the sacrament of God's message in the world, continues Christ's work of dialogue. Her duty is always to proclaim the reign of God, to bring the proclamation of this message into every aspect of human life, and to seek the fulfilment of all things in Christ. The Church is particularly concerned with man's religious experience, the motivating and leaving agent in his culture. This means that the Church must constantly be involved in dialogue with men of other

religions.¹ The Christian finds himself continually evangelizing and being evangelized by his partners in dialogue.²

12. Christians believe that God's saving will is at work, in many different ways, in all religions. It has been recognised since the time of the apostolic Church, and stated clearly again by the Second Vatican Council,³ that the Spirit of Christ is active outside the bounds of the visible Church.⁴ God's saving grace is not limited to members of the Church, but is offered to every person. His grace may lead some to accept baptism and enter the Church, but it cannot be presumed that this must always be the case. His ways are mysterious and unfathomable, and no one can dictate the direction of his grace.

13. The purpose of the Church's proclaiming the message of Christ — which is its central mission — is to call man to the values of the Kingdom of God. We find such values also present in Islam. In dialogue, therefore, a Christian hopes that both he and his Muslim brother will turn anew to God's Kingdom, their own faiths becoming richer by their mutual inter-change, their mission to the world more fruitful by their shared insights and commitments.

Pastoral Orientations

14. *Dialogue of Life.* Christians living among Muslims should recognise the importance of dialogue with their Muslim brethren. For most Christians, this means what can be called a dialogue of life. This is the most essential aspect of dialogue, and it is accomplished by Christians and Muslims living together in peace. Each gives witness to the other concerning the values he has found in his faith, and through the daily practice of brotherhood, helpfulness, open-heartedness and hospitality, each shows himself to be a God-fearing neighbour. The true Christians and Muslims offer to a busy world values arising from God's message when they revere the elderly, conscientiously rear the young, care for the sick and the poor in their midst, and work together for social justice, welfare and human rights. We encourage Christians to be ever more deeply involved in this dialogue of life.

1. *Nostra Aetate*, n. 2.

2. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, n. 13.

3. St Justin Martyr attributed all truths in non-Christian religions to the Word of God (Christ). St Gregory Nazianzen, at the funeral oration of his father who was converted just before his death said: "Even before he entered our fold, he was one of us. Just as many of our own are not with us because their lives alienate them from the common body of the faithful, in like manner many of those outside are with us, insofar as by their way of life they anticipate the faith and only lack in name what they possess in attitude."

Vatican Council II in line with Scripture and Tradition teaches: "We ought to believe that the Holy Spirit, in a manner known only to God, offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this Paschal Mystery" (*Gaudium et Spes*, n. 22). In *Lumen Gentium*, n. 16, the Council Fathers say: "The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place among these there are the Muslims...".

4. *Redemptor Hominis*, n. 6.

15. *Formal Dialogue.* This also has its place in the relationship between Christians and Muslims. When they come together for this purpose they must do so in attitudes of humility and openness. They should direct their attention to the issues that confront believers who have a special mission to their societies, and share the experiences that arise from their own religious heritage. From such common roots, Christians and Muslims can search together for solutions to the pressing needs of our nations and our world.

16. *Theological Dialogue.* Scholarly dialogue also has a special role. In this work the real differences which exist between Christianity and Islam must be acknowledged, but these differences must not be exaggerated or distorted. This attempt to clarify misunderstandings and to delineate the areas of convergence and divergence between Christianity and Islam is a goal of formal, theological dialogue. Irreconcilable theological differences need never be an obstacle to dialogue.

17. *Education for Dialogue.* Many Christians feel they know very little about Islam, and thus find it difficult to understand the practices and ideals of Muslims. Christian parents, catechists and educators should teach their children about God's love for Muslims and about the many good and holy values in the Islamic religion. Basic knowledge about the belief and practices of Muslims, taken from reliable and objective sources, should form a part of Catholic catechetical training. Education about Islam should give an unbiased presentation of the religion of Muslims, while at the same time avoiding any tendencies towards indifferentism. While firm in their commitment to Christ, Christians must respect the beliefs and practices of Muslims.

18. *The Role of Bishops.* Bishops living in areas where there are Muslims should try to present an example to their people by their knowledge of the teachings of Islam and by fostering cordial and open relations with Muslim leaders. Bishops are urged to provide training for priests, brothers and sisters, and lay leaders so that they have understanding and respect for Islam. Bishops' Conferences should also send individuals for specialised training at established institutes, with a view towards their working as animators in their respective countries.

19. *Ecumenical Dimensions.* Catholics must not forget the ecumenical aspect of this dialogue. In a number of countries, Christians of other denominations have preceded Catholics in the area of dialogue with Islam. Catholics are encouraged to co-operate with other Christians in common projects and in sharing resources. Catholic Bishops' Conferences could give leadership to Catholics in this matter by working together with national Councils of Churches.

Conclusion

20. What the participants of BIRA II are calling for is dialogue. This means a change of attitude towards Islam. In the past, the attitude of Christians towards Muslims has not always followed the

example of love given by their teacher and saviour, Jesus Christ. We exhort Catholics in Asia to let their lives be guided by the spirit of the Second Vatican Council:

Although in the course of the centuries many quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this most sacred Synod urges all to forget the past and to strive sincerely for mutual understanding. On behalf of all mankind, let them make common cause of safeguarding and fostering social justice, moral values, peace, and freedom.⁶

The Participants of BIRA II wish God's blessings upon their Muslim brethren on this First Day of the new Islamic century.

21 November 1979/1 Muharram 1400

5. *Nostra Aetate*, n. 3.

7

Correspondence

Dear Editor,

It is good to find that you are opening the pages of your monthly to new authors and writers. It would be helpful if a short bio-description be given of them so that we could situate their views in the proper context.

Fr Paul Jackson has written a fine article on the "Jesuits at the Mughal Court", in the March 1980 issue. But in this article he has made the following statement: "It is inadmissible to have conversion to faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and one's Saviour as the *aim* of any mission enterprise." It is difficult to find any way to justify the statement as it stands. No doubt faith cannot be forced, but to say that *one's aim* should not be this seems to me to be completely false and against all documents and teaching of the Church.

With best wishes.

Yours faithfully,

St Theresa's Seminary,
33/36 Jaipur Road,
Ajmer

Cyril PEREIRA

Correspondence

Dear Editor,

Discussion on sex, especially in ecclesiastical circles, tends to generate more heat than light. The letter of Anthony Coelho, S.J., which you published in the March issue of VIDYAJYOTI (p. 144) is a case in point. The tone and language of the letter, it seems to me, little befits a counsellor; moreover, the letter is very one-sided. Anthony Coelho's remark, "What was the use of Mervyn Carapiet's 'Masturbation and Sacred Orders'?", surprises me since he himself admits that "The problem of masturbation among seminarians and candidates to the priesthood is a real one and needs our attention." It would be presumptuous on the part of Anthony Coelho, to think that the problem can only be approached from a counsellor's point of view — a point of view of which Mervyn Carapiet himself is not unaware, since he wrote in his article: "The subject of counselling in this area cannot be pursued here as it is too vast and specialized for one article" (VIDYAJYOTI, December 1979, pp. 518-519). Anthony Coelho's letter only makes negative comments on the article; I personally regret the absence of any constructive criticism. Instead, he ends his letter with an exhortation for a pastoral approach to the problem — one, incidentally, which the author does reflect in his article when he writes: "Once the candidate is accepted for the priesthood he must be taken as he is, with all his faults and proclivities"; and on the same page he adds: "The humble frankness of the student will be matched by the understanding and competence of the counsellor" (ibid., p. 518).

I for one would agree in substance with what the author has to say about the problem of masturbation, its symptoms and the underlying psychodynamic factors that unconsciously motivate the person into this unhealthy outlet. But, while granting the legitimacy of the author's approach to the problem, I would insist, in the context of seminary (priestly or religious) training, that it be complemented by some of the following considerations in order that the help offered to the candidates be made therapeutic. As a spiritual director, I would also insist that hasty and categorical conclusions tending to exclude candidates from major orders be avoided. The problem of masturbation is a complex one and, therefore, needs to be tackled from a global perspective that takes into account the moral, spiritual, social and psychological dimensions of a candidate's personality. Hence, by way of observations I would like to make the following points:

First of all, the problem must be approached with a Christian vision of Human Sexuality that highlights the aspect of self-transcendence, central to both human and vocational maturity. In this context masturbation can be seen as a hindrance to *self-transcendence* and *internalization* which is the main objective of priestly and religious formation.

Secondly, there is need to relate the problem of masturbation to the 'psycho-sexual' integration of the person. And this in turn is related directly to the formation of the 'core gender identity' that gives basic sense to one's masculinity in man and femininity in woman. It is the distortion of this 'core gender identity' that brings about sexual disorders, of which masturbation is one of the most common manifestations. And therefore any meaningful discussion of the problem of masturbation should tackle this basic issue.

Thirdly, although the problem of masturbation can cause serious difficulties in the vocational situation of priesthood and religious life, yet it is important to take into account that it is basically a human problem, caused primarily by certain types of family constellations that may have created insecurities and inadequacies during the early years of a person's life. Hence in our approach to the solution of the problem, it is crucial that we take into consideration the family upbringing of the person, thus avoiding pious and ready-made answers.

Fourthly, because of the diverse etiological factors there is need to distinguish different manifestations of the problem:

a) at the developmental process of adolescence, masturbation can be a problem proper to that stage.

b) occasional or incidental reaction to stress, tensions and pressures of life, to sense of loneliness and rejection.

c) in abnormal situations, as in the case of married people when the spouses are separated from each other for a long duration of times.

d) neurotic type, where the person is compulsively driven to masturbate, resulting into a habit.

e) hedonistic masturbation, for the sake of pleasure, motivated by narcissistic trends.

f) compensatory masturbation, as an expression of revenge, hatred, aggression, hostility and rebellion.

Fifthly, because of the various manifestations of the problem it is of great importance in the helping process to see what symbolic meaning the person masturbating attaches to it: e.g. anger, revolt, reaction against castration by parents, expression of inadequacy, self-assertion, pleasure, etc. Once the symbolic meaning is discovered, there is need to restructure and reorientate the symbols and their meaning in the person's life.

Sixthly, in a helping situation, the counsellor or the spiritual director should help the individual to recognize, accept and integrate feelings like shame, anger, fear, disgust, guilt, depression, etc., that are proper to the act of masturbation, both before, during and after the act.

Seventhly, since they suffer a distortion of their sexual identity, the people with the problem of masturbation need a good model to identify with, someone who is understanding, consistent, trustworthy, firm and yet kind, non-judgemental, disciplined, etc.—endowed, namely, with those qualities whose acquisition will set them on the healing process.

Eighthly, in the helping process do not focus on the problem, the symptoms or even on some ready-made solutions. It is often therapeutic to defocalise the problem by helping the person to take an active part in social activities, games, hobbies, recreations, friendships, etc.

Ninthly, in order to discover what is the person's motivation and what inner strength he has to bring about his own healing, find out what kind of fantasies he has before, during and after the masturbatory acts. If the fantasies are of the homosexual kind, the motivation and the inner strength are weak; if they are of heterosexual type, the prognosis is good.

Finally, the candidate to the priesthood having the problem of masturbation often needs qualified help because masturbation is related to some deep-seated personality conflicts. I agree with Mervyn Carapiet that the normal seminary training is not sufficient to resolve this problem. This unfortunate situation is, according to me, abnormal. It should be remedied by training formators or spiritual directors capable of offering professional help. Many a times the solutions or answers proposed by formators or spiritual fathers in our seminaries are very one-sided, based as they are on the mistaken supposition that the 'supernatural' alone will do the job of healing. While granting that supernatural help is therapeutic, I would strongly insist that the natural or human means are equally important to bring about real healing in the persons affected with the problem of masturbation. After all grace builds on nature.

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Delhi 110054

Joe MATHIAS, S.J.

See also p. 245

Book Reviews

The Second and Third Eye

Truth is Two-Eyed. By John A. T. ROBINSON. London, SCM Press, 1979. Pp. 161. £ 4.95.

It has often been remarked that it is easier to write a book about India after a short visit as a tourist than after a long stay in the country; and it has been observed that such first impressions, rapidly jotted down, are often superficial. What is basically lacking is the ability — if not the will — to understand; this ability can only come through a long acquaintance. It would, however, be a mistake to dismiss *a priori*, on this or any other score, Robinson's theological reflections after his recent two-month stay in India. He was invited to deliver the Teape lectures in Delhi, Madras and Calcutta, for the winter 1977. He himself admits his thorough lack of preparation to speak with professional competence on the subject of comparative religion and inter-faith dialogue. But he came to India, thrilled at the prospect of discovery and with a sure instinct that he had much to gain from entering into her religious and theological world. *Truth is Two-Eyed* is the basic conviction verified in this book. Robinson makes it clear that his interest in Hindu-Christian dialogue is based on a broader and more fundamental concern with two irreducibly distinct perspectives on the relationship between human existence and the mystery of divine transcendence. These are the "two eyes" with which truth can be apprehended and which need to be combined lest our vision should remain one-sided. The values of communion and of union are clearly exemplified by M. Buber's "primary word" I-Thou and Shankara's 'Thou art That', respectively. Robinson rightly insists that the two perceptions of reality cut across the boundaries of East and West; nevertheless the first predominates in the Western hemisphere and the prophetic religions, the other in the Eastern and mystical religions. Hence the value for a Western Christian of an Indian pilgrimage, to help him open or heal his often atrophied second eye.

That the treatment has worked in Robinson's case is made clear by the book. He seeks to show the complementarity of the two eyes in four central chapters on "God and the Personal", "The Christ and the Historical", "Man and the Material", and "The Uniqueness of Christ". It is not difficult to recognize here the fundamental topics which have in fact engaged the attention of Hindu-Christian dialogue for quite some time now, and on the Christian side have prompted various attempts at an Indian theology. Whether the complementarity has on all the issues been shown convincingly remains, however, arguable. To this writer it seems more professed than argued. In a sense Robinson makes the task too easy for himself. His allergy to ontology in the elucidation of the Christian mystery is well known; the same remains at work in his approach to the encounter between Hinduism and Christianity. There results the danger of a combined but blurred vision, lacking finally a sharp focus. A case in point is Christology. Robinson has exposed his Christological position in *The Human Face of God* (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1974, pp. 275-277). He continues to refer to this work; and, though he professes that the incarnation of the Word of God "represents one of the bed-rock categories of distinctly Christian truth" (p. 117), it should in his mind be "redeemed from dependence upon any particular . . . interpretation" (ibid.). Rejecting as he does the ontological interpretation, he finds himself in harmony with interpretations of Jesus Christ where less than full justice appears to be done to the mystery of his person and, consequently, to the decisiveness of the event.

This is not to say that Robinson's theoretical approach to inter-religious dialogue is to be faulted. He rightly stresses as a matter of honesty the need for partners in dialogue not to compromise on the content of their faith; syncretism is not the way to dialogue. But the fact remains that a de-ontologised interpretation of the Christian mystery combines more easily with currents of Eastern mysticism than does an ontological one. Does it not too easily?

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Third-Eye Theology. Theology in Formation in Asian Settings. By Choan-Seng Song. Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1979. Pp. 279. \$ 9.95.

The author, a member of the Reformed Church and a prominent Chinese theologian from Taiwan, is also a much acclaimed writer. In particular, his *Christian Mission in Reconstruction — An Asian Attempt* (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1976, pp. 429-430) has made an important contribution to the current rethinking of the Christian mission in the Asian situation, with all that this involves by way of contextualization and inculturation. From the Asian mission in reconstruction, Choan-Seng Song turns in this new work to the kind of theologising which in the Asian context ought to animate the mission. This theology he calls "Third-Eye Theology".

Defining the term, derived from Buddhism, Song notes that the Western theology traditionally taught in Asia, was two-dimensional, incapable of a third-dimensional insight. "Because of its two-dimensionality it is a flat theology" (p. 11). Time has come in Asia to open the third eye and to do theology with it. Asia, of course, is a very broad setting, which the author does not cover in its entirety. The religious background he has in mind is mostly Buddhist, Taoist, Confucianist; the scene extends to Taiwan, China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam . . . The Indian context and Hinduism hardly enter into the picture, though an inspiring parallel is drawn between Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. Song cannot be faulted for this, which rather confirms that there is room and need for more than one Asian theology. Yet Asian-ness is a reality, and even though the Indian scene is not directly evoked, the book should raise a deep echo in India also.

The book provides a model for the kind of inductive theology that reflects on the light of Christian revelation on the concrete situation, social, economic, political, religious and otherwise, of people and peoples. It turns out to be inter-religious dialogue in practice and a powerful plea for the praxis of liberation. Running through all this is a theology of the "pain-love" of God: the "God of Asia" is a God who suffers with and in his people. This insight into the mystery of God is pursued to its last conclusion in the cross of Jesus Christ. Song depends much here on the Lutheran tradition, renewed by J. Moltmann (cf. *The Crucified God*,

reviewed in VIDYAJYOTI 1978, pp. 240-241) after Bonhoeffer. But the Christian God is also a God of hope, and this too has been manifested in Jesus Christ, in the mystery of his resurrection. As the suffering of God's people is his own suffering, so too their resurrection is his. The Christian God is a "political God", and the last word of his politics belongs not to death but to resurrection.

I have indicated what seems to be the main thread of Song's theology, but nothing can replace the reading of the book itself. Only then will one be able to discover the light thrown by the third eye on what otherwise would simply appear to be familiar themes of liberation theology. Song's chief merit consists in pioneering an Asian model for this theology.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Begegnung mit dem Buddhismus. Eine Einführung. By Heinrich DUMOULIN. Freiburg, Herder Verlag, 1978. (Herderbucherei, n. 642). Pp. 173. (No price given.)

In Asia as well as in the West the encounter of Christianity with Buddhism has entered a new phase. More and more gifted and truly searching persons from the West or from the East enter into a deep study of these two great living religious traditions and participate actively in important aspects of the other tradition's spiritual practice. For some the encounter takes place mainly at the level of spiritual practice, for others it consists above all in study and research.

The present pocket-book offers to the reader brought up in the Western tradition a precious introduction to such an encounter. It, moreover, provides signposts for it and vision. All the great themes of Buddhism are dealt with: suffering and existence, the self, morality, faith and meditation and, in great depth and precision, the experience of transcendence.

An encounter of this kind automatically removes widespread misunderstandings of Buddhism as being marked by joyless pessimism, by life-denying passivity and irreverent atheism. The work combines with concise and balanced information a life-long experience of active participation in Christian-Buddhist dialogue in Japan at the highest level. Fr H. Dumoulin S.J., originally from Germany, came to Japan in his student years and became there one of the outstanding Christian scholars of Buddhism. His work, moreover, betrays a solid know-

other, the function of feeling and fantasy-dominated thinking; and, on the other hand, active dependence on oneself with its function of domination and conquest of the external world. This oscillation between the two is always necessary, as one moment of the movement gives the resource energies required by the other. The former is "oriented towards images which may be connected with the public world" but which originate in imagination, "in the mind". The latter "is oriented towards recognition and dealing with present and future realities of the 'public' world" (p. 25). Man, *homo duplex*, is in need of this double movement at all levels of his life, individual and corporate. Religion is "a social institution which provides a setting in ritual for the regulation of the oscillation processes in a social grouping" (p. 52). Religious behaviour is "the behaviour of people, either individually or collectively, which represents (symbolically) dependence on some idea, thing or person, the implied nature or power of which is not wholly susceptible to rational explanation" (p. 71). The book makes a plea that religion should take into consideration its primary function as focussed on dependence on the external world, to find there the source of energy and courage to engage in worldly tasks with a feeling of self-dependence. In theological terms, the Church has its function in the first moment of the oscillation, while the Kingdom represents the second. One should not be confused with the other. This analysis has consequences for the types of leadership and management of the local Churches.

Movement in the subtitle means (strangely) the ideology or 'rationale' which a religion provides for the process, whether in myth or in theology. While the movement gives form to the process, the process gives life to the movement.

There are many insights and suggestions in the book that will interest the theologian. For instance it claims that religion is lived not only by those who either regularly or occasionally practise it personally, but also by those who by proxy, as it were, feel the need of a church building or other religious symbols in their surroundings, even though they never make use of them in their personal lives. There are many ways in which the Mystery of life touches the depth of the religious consciousness of man, and therefore one need not be in a hurry to discard what *appears* as no longer accepted or relevant. According to the

author there are two types of Churches: the 'communal' type that is formed by traditional membership and provides the whole religious culture of a place, extending therefore to the non-practising; and the "associational" type which depends exclusively on voluntary and committed membership. Reed, a minister of the Church of England, clearly favours the former type. This implies for him the need for parishes to be really local, closely bound to the place of residence of people, for it is primarily in the home, and not in the place of work, that men and women experience external dependence in their lives. Irrespective, therefore, of the promise of greater efficacy offered by larger conglomerates, the Church must try to be present in residential areas; its norms of efficacy cannot be derived from the patterns of business management, which are based on the moments of dependence on self and domination of the world. Analysing folk religion on the one side and the secular religious movements on the other, the author thinks that the former remains too narrowly enclosed within the individual's need for external dependence, and does not lead him to an active response to the world; while the secular religions do not give sufficient importance to the need for external dependence, and therefore fail as sources of energy for their followers. Only 'apostolic' religion fulfils both ends of its function properly.

The book offers many interesting ideas, though often explained in rather abstract language and somewhat repetitiously. The author claims that, though his research is done primarily on the Church of England, its results are equally applicable to other denominations and indeed to other religions. One may get the impression that at times he interprets the data too much in function of a chosen schema. Some, moreover, will find that too much stress is given to the psychological aspects of religion, as if these constituted their whole reality, and that too much emphasis has been placed on the "external dependence" function. But one must remember that this function is viewed primarily at the level of the corporate life of people and that the dependence mood is related to its opposite pole. At any rate sociologists of religion will find here an original study, and pastoral theologians will find many of their own assumptions challenged by its theses.

G. GISPERT-SAUCH, S.J.

See also p. 240

Cum permissu superiorum

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By M. RUTHNASWAMY

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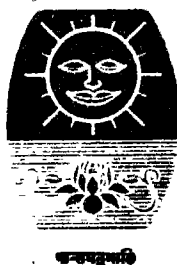
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JOURNAL OF THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION



(67)



Authority in the Church Today

Lay Participation in Church

Decisions

Pastoral Aspects of Family Planning

JUNE-JULY 1980

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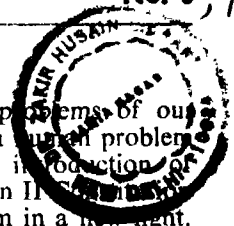
In This Issue

"Authority and Freedom" is one of the great problems of our day in the Church as well as in society at large. It is a human problem and it is a theological problem. Theologically, the introduction of an initial chapter on the "People of God" in the Vatican II Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, has placed the problem in a new light. Starting from there, authority needs to be re-defined and re-interpreted at the level of all relationships: laity-hierarchy, priests-bishops, local Church-central authority. Vatican II has given guide-lines and established structures of participation and co-responsibility; but it has not, and could not solve all the problems. We live in a period when the Church is painfully searching for a new equilibrium and a more evangelical style; when also vastly divergent concepts of authority are encountering each other.

Some recent events call the problem to mind in a vivid manner. The relationship between bishops and theologians has been for some time a particularly soft area; the central authority has now found it necessary to intervene in the Küng affair. The local Churches must develop their life with a legitimate measure of autonomy; but Pope John Paul II has called a Synod of Dutch bishops in Rome to study developments in the Church of Holland. In his article, Fr J. NEUNER reflects on the problem of Authority in the Church Today in the light of these events. He points to some aspects of Church leadership which need to be cultivated in order that crises may be avoided and communion fostered.

An important point where Church leadership is in need of a new style is the Participation of Lay People in Church Decisions. The Church, as we know well, is not a democracy where decisions are taken by majority vote. The hierarchy has an unassailable role to play, and authority is part of its charism. Yet, as J. M. DE MESA argues in his article, if the mission of the Church is the common responsibility of all the members, must not the laity share also in the exercise of authority? How this is to be realized requires further reflection and elaboration; but the principle of participation should be clear.

The Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* remains even today the most disputed papal document of recent years and has figured in the forefront of discussions on authority, of papal authority in particular. Pastoral guide-lines for its interpretation have been offered by various episcopal conferences. In his article on Pastoral Aspects of Family Planning, Fr F. PODIMATTAM clarifies the teaching of the encyclical and shows what pastoral guide-lines may be expected from the forthcoming Synod of Bishops in Rome on the Family, with regard to contraception. This is the first in a series of articles we hope to publish on the theme of the Synod.



Authority in the Church Today

J. NEUNER, S.J.

THE crisis of authority in the Church has again surfaced in the recent discussion of the verdict which denied Hans Küng ecclesiastical approval to teach theology. The highly emotional issue has been widely divulged through the mass media and often stirred by them. (K. Rahner estimates that 85% of the articles on the Küng affair are based on emotions rather than on adequate information and serious reflection). But many are also seriously disturbed. It is, therefore, important to reflect on the meaning of ecclesiastical authority today and on the way of its functioning.

This short article points to some aspects of Church authority which are significant in the present context; it then offers some reflections on the burning issue of Küng's case and on another event which has stirred the mind of many modern Christians, the recent Dutch Synod.

Four Aspects of Ecclesiastical Authority

We encounter today two opposite attitudes towards Church authority, both widespread among Christians. Many welcome it as a source of security in the Church, frequently stressed in former times: We have the truth, enjoy safe guidance, are protected against aberrations. Today this attitude becomes vocal and the desire is expressed that in the many discussions of our time bishops should give clear guidance, offer again the sheltered assurance which Catholics used to have in former times. On the other side, authority is strongly suspected and resented as it seems to conflict with the deepest aspirations of contemporary man who, as the Council observed, "is becoming increasingly conscious of the dignity of the human person", so that "the demand is increasingly made that men should exercise fully their own judgement and responsible freedom in their actions".¹

(1) Vatican II presents authority as *responsible leadership* in the Church. Ecclesiastical offices "aim at the good of the whole body". Office bearers are "dedicated to promoting the interests of their

1. *Dignitatis Humanae*, n. 1.

brethren", so that all "through their free and well ordered efforts towards a common goal may attain to salvation".²

Authority in the Church is the continued guidance of the faithful through Jesus Christ who leads his followers not only through his Spirit, who will teach them all things (cf. Jn 14, 26), but also visibly through those to whom his authority and mission are entrusted. Thus the responsibility of the pastors for the community is deeply engrained in the consciousness of the early Church. Paul's epistles are dictated by his pastoral concern, which, in his turn, he shares with the local leaders. According to the Acts he addresses the elders of Ephesus: "Take heed to yourselves and all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians to feed the Church of the Lord which he obtained with his own blood" (Acts 20, 28).

The concrete structures in which ecclesiastical offices developed is of secondary importance. Decisive is the fact that from the outset there is authority in the Church in the name of Jesus Christ, not delegated by the community of believers, but coming from God; not autonomous as if any man could put his own stamp on the Church of Christ, but exercised in a community of which Jesus Christ himself is the only Lord. Jesus told Peter: "Feed *my* sheep" (Jn 21, 15).

Thus the Constitution on the Church of Vatican II can introduce the section on bishops in terms which express Christ's own presence in the Church: "In the person of the bishops, then... our Lord Jesus Christ, the supreme High Priest, is present in the midst of the faithful."³ The primary task of Church authority is to represent Jesus Christ in the community. It is responsible for the faithful proclamation of the Christian message and the unity of God's people. It is therefore necessary that today, in a time of change and new trends, of differences and conflicts, Pope and bishops should be keenly aware of their responsibility.

(2) This responsible leadership must be kept in mind when we turn to the second feature of Church authority: its *openness to the realities of world and man*. This openness, characteristic of Vatican II, is not a pragmatic attitude, a readiness to yield to passing fashions in world and Church. Rather, it is rooted in the very essence of revelation. God's word is addressed to man. It does not remain in the timelessness of God's transcendence but embodies itself in a developing world, in society and history: "The Logos was made flesh." Thus, according to Vatican II, Jesus is not only the proclaimer of good news and divine doctrine: his very coming and living among us is revelation;

2. *Lumen Gentium*, n. 18.

3. *Lumen Gentium*, n. 21

he "completed and perfected revelation by the total fact of his presence and self-manifestation".⁴ From the beginning of the Church the Christ event was accepted and interpreted in concrete relation to the Christian communities. Each of the gospels is distinct, written in response to specific needs and as a challenge to concrete problems in the local Churches, yet faithful to the one mysterium of the Risen Lord.

It is a necessary consequence of gradual developments that the ongoing reflection on, and responsible defence of the full meaning of the Christ event should express itself in conceptual systems, and that Christian life should form stable social structures. In this process the Church is subject to the general laws of social and cultural developments. Still, the Christian community has as its source and centre the Christ event. The duty of the Church at all times is to relate this event anew to changing situations and needs of the world.

This sense of responsibility for the needs of the world appears in the vast range of encyclicals and addresses during the pontificates of Pius XI and XII; it found its full expression in the Council. The Constitution on the Church in the Modern World is its most conspicuous result. This Constitution innovates in ecclesiastical documents not only through its worldwide openness and concern, but mostly through its new orientation. The world is understood no longer merely as the addressee of a message and a doctrine, already definitely fixed, but as a partner in its own right and with its own laws which must be acknowledged by the Church.⁵ In our fast changing world, with ever new questions and pressing problems, God's kingdom must be realized in new ways.

In this process the Church is not only teacher, but shares in a dialogue. She stands for the word of God and has the unalienable message of God's saving love and power. But she must also read the signs of the times and be aware of the real needs of the world. She has to respect the personal conscience of people, because truth cannot be forced on them; it "can impose itself on the mind of man only in virtue of its own truth which wins over the mind with both gentleness and power".⁶ This holds good not only in relation to those outside the Church but also for the faithful who resent any display of authoritarianism.

In the dialogue with a changing world the Church has also to learn. The Council acknowledges "how much the Church has profited from the history and development of mankind". Through the contact

4. *Dei Verbum*, n. 4.

5. *Gaudium et Spes*, nn. 36 and 59.

6. *Dignitatis Humanae*, n. 1.

with men of many cultures she comes to a deeper understanding and expression of her own message. She also gains better insights into the working of her own visible and social structure, which "can be enriched, and is being enriched by the evolution of social life".⁷

All these are far-reaching statements on the Church and her attitude in modern society. They were proposed by the Council in the atmosphere of a certain euphoria, a liberating experience of new openness and freedom, which, however, had to be put to the test and borne out in the realities of the post-conciliar era. The proper realisation of this new approach is the problem with which the present situation confronts us.

(3) In this openness to a changing world the crucial requirement is *discernment*: What in Christian tradition and doctrine is unalienable, and what can be changed and adapted? And further: if something is open to change, when and how should such a change be brought about? Both questions are difficult.

In matters of doctrine no easy answer can be given to the question of distinguishing the truth which must be proclaimed and the formula in which it has been enshrined in the past. The most pressing example today is the faith in Jesus Christ which has been handed down through the centuries in the formula of Chalcedon: the one person of the Logos who subsists in two natures, the divine and the human. Can such formulas, which are alien to modern ways of thinking, be replaced by modern patterns of thought without prejudice to the full faith in Jesus Christ?⁸

The second question is equally important: The Church is not an academic institution concerned with doctrines only, but a community of faith and life. Authority in the Church is pastoral, responsible for the community. Not only doctrinal issues, but also and mostly questions of discipline and Church structures are at stake. The Church must be careful not to give way to passing fashions or to tactics of pressure groups. However, she must be open to changing needs in modern society.

These needs will not be the same all over the world. A Church discipline with uniform patterns for all Christians, e.g. the Latin mass in all continents, which prevailed in the past and gave a strong and secure sense of coherence, will not be applicable in the same way in times to come. These patterns developed in the Western world and had been obediently adopted in all countries. But the irreversible awareness

7. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 44.

8. The attempt made by E. Schillebeeckx in this direction will be discussed in a forthcoming issue of VIDYAJYOTI. (ed).

of the real universality of the Church and the need to include the vast diversity of culture into her unity will demand much diversification. Hence the proper relation of the local Churches to the universal community of all believers will also have to be spelled out in actual practice.

(4) One more dimension of Church authority must be mentioned: *the personal care and concern*. The biblical symbol of this care is that of the shepherd, applied to Jesus in a unique way: he not only feeds his flock, but lays down his life for them.

Obviously the pastoral care for a Church spread over the continents requires an elaborate administrative set-up which easily tends to become impersonal. Still, within and above the Sacred Congregations of Rome and the episcopal curias pastors must be present to their people with personal care and concern. "Bishops are to regard their priests as brothers and friends."⁹ People are more important than rules. The future of the Church depends to a great extent on the degree to which personal communion on every level can be realized. Never should Christians have the feeling that they are confronted with an impersonal, anonymous institution. It was the secret of Pope John XXIII's popularity that people sensed his personal closeness. It was the greatness and burden of Paul VI that for him, in a different way, Church events were personal concerns, his own joys and sorrows. Most problems have a personal dimension and cannot be solved apart from their personal implications.

The general perspectives just outlined may serve as a help to reflect on the actual use of ecclesiastical authority in our time. We turn to two recent events which have received wide publicity: the withdrawal from Hans Küng of the faculty to teach theology, and the Dutch Synod.

The Case of Hans Küng

It is obviously beyond the scope of this article to enter into an exposition of Küng's teaching.¹⁰ On December 15th, 1979, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith declared that "Hans Küng in his writings deviates from the full truth of Catholic faith and hence cannot be considered any longer a catholic theologian and teach as such". This decision was the climax of a number of admonitions made to him to abstain from proposing doctrines in conflict with the teaching of the Church, mostly his denial of papal infallibility.

9. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 7.

10. An analysis of H. Küng's Christology is found in *Indian Theological Studies*, 1977, pp. 51-71.

A full documentation of the development of the case has been published by the German bishops on 18 December 1979, containing 58 documents and filling 64 folio pages, in 128 columns. Yet, even so, for most people it will remain difficult to form a balanced judgment. How many can read and digest these lengthy documents? Who is able to analyse the complex doctrinal issues involved? People are puzzled: Küng was able to write about Jesus Christ convincingly, in an attractive manner, and to draw modern people to him. So what is wrong with his Christology? For most readers it is not possible to enter into the doctrinal issues of the later sections of the book. As to infallibility: Probably there are few terms in the theological vocabulary less popular and intelligible than this. Cannot all people err? and they do err! The claim to infallibility appears as easy self-protection by Church authority against criticism and searching questions. How difficult it is to explain its real meaning: that truly only God is infallible, but that a weak and groping Church, confronted with ever new and puzzling questions, is convinced of the incredible assurance given her by Jesus Christ that, when it really comes to ultimate alternatives in interpreting God's word, his Spirit will not allow her to go wrong! If explanations are of little avail, upheavals in the Church are a sufficiently clear sign that such an assurance is required.

The controversy began with a letter of the Sacred Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, dated 30 April, 1968, about Kung's book, *The Church* (1967). After his later book, *Infallible? An Enquiry* (1970), he was invited to a colloquy in Rome. Küng made his appearance dependent on certain conditions; the discussion of these conditions remained inconclusive. In February 1971, the German Bishops' Conference took up the problem of infallibility. On July 12th Küng was informed that a process had been started by the Sacred Congregation against his book; the themes were indicated to him which, according to the Congregation, seemed difficult to reconcile with Catholic doctrine. On 23 June 1973 there followed the Declaration of the Sacred Congregation, *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, which dealt with the problems raised by Kung's book without mentioning his name. On July 4th 1973, Kung was presented with the alternative either to accept *Mysterium Ecclesiae* without further discussion, which would bring the case to an end, or to come to Rome for the proposed colloquy. Küng refused. In the correspondence that followed he mentioned that eventually, through further study, he might come to change his views. In view of this possibility, the Congregation admonished Kung on 15.2.1975 no longer to propagate the objectionable teaching. For the present the proceedings against him were dropped.

In the meantime the book *Christ Sein* (On Being a Christian) (Munich 1974) was published, which created further concern. Cardinal Döpfner used his personal influence to keep the case in Germany. With deep personal concern he wrote to Küng seriously to examine his position. However Cardinal Döpfner died 23.7.1976. The day before his death he had drafted another letter to Küng, proposing a

colloquy with the German bishops, which finally took place on 12 January 1977, in Stuttgart. The bishops felt that the questions placed before Küng were not answered by him satisfactorily. Hence on 22 April 1977 they put before him the specific issues of Christology which still needed clarification. Küng excused himself with other serious engagements; a detailed answer would demand much time. In a letter to Cardinal Höffner, now President of the German Bishops' Conference, he indicated that in his new forthcoming book, *Existiert Gott?* (which appeared in February 1978), the questions would be clarified in a wider and relevant context. However, on 14th November 1977 the German bishops published a declaration about *On being a Christian*, which Küng called an authoritarian self-justification without self-criticism. In 1978 Walter Jens published a book on Küng's life and work (*Um nichts als die Wahrheit*, Munich 1978), which included an appeal by Küng for reconciliation. He asked Georg Moser, Bishop of Freiburg, to which Tübingen belongs, to divulge this appeal; but bishop Moser could see in this appeal only Küng's own intransigence which, he felt, was bound to lead to a break.

The final confrontation was sparked by Küng's introduction to A. B. Hasler's book, *Wie der Papst Unfehlbar wurde* (How the Pope Became Infallible, Munich 1979), a summary of the author's 2 volumes of documentation on Vatican I. In his introduction Küng once more proposed his thesis on infallibility which, he claimed, is affirmed not of the Catholic Church but of the curial system. He called for the establishment of an international ecumenical commission to examine the problem. For him primacy can do without infallibility; it is "a pastoral service to the whole Church... which could be a great help to the entire Christian world today". Besides, Küng also published a booklet of theological meditations on the Church. Bishop Moser saw in these publications a renewed provocation and wrote to Küng that they must lead to unpleasant consequences.

The consequences followed in the form of the Roman Declaration of 15th December, 1979, mentioned above. With a deep personal concern, Bishop Moser tried once more to intervene. On December 28th, he and the German Cardinals went to Rome to discuss the matter, but no basis for a revision of the verdict was found. As to the legal question of H. Küng's chair in Tübingen, it has finally been solved by the separation of the Institute of Ecumenical Research — of which Küng remains the director — from the Catholic Theological Faculty.

One must acknowledge, and actually welcome, the sense of responsibility of bishops and pope in the proceedings. One surely cannot deny the right and duty of Church authority to decide who can be trusted with the task of teaching Catholic theology and to prepare priests for their ministry in the Church. One will also admire the patience and

deep personal concern expressed through all the stages of the proceedings.

Still, one would desire that in our times, with the keenly awakened awareness of the inviolable rights of the human person, forms of inquiry and procedure would be found in tune with modern requirements. Concrete proposals to this effect have repeatedly been made.¹¹ Not only would much bitterness and criticism be avoided, but in a climate of freer communication many issues could be resolved before they lead to final confrontations.

While demands for better procedures must be urged, it still does not seem helpful to refuse cooperation within the existing system. E. Schillebeeckx went to Rome when he was invited (also last December), and answered questions concerning his book, *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*, while raising difficulties to some aspects of the procedure. Küng's refusal to cooperate led to the final breakdown of communications, which harmed both sides.

One more point in Küng's protest seems significant: his complaint that he was not given the opportunity to present his case before the pope though he had repeatedly asked for this. This request has been called presumptuous as it seemed to imply that no one except the pope was competent to deal with his problem. But there is another side to it: the pastoral office of the Church must keep its personal character; offices alone are inadequate. The pope receives dignitaries and diplomats of many colours in private audience. Is not a Catholic theologian, who is in serious trouble, more important? He should feel that he is not confronted with an anonymous system but with a father and friend. Not only could Küng then propose his case, but the pope could also speak to him with personal concern. Many may think that under the given conditions such an interview would have proved useless — but who can prove it? In God's kingdom the important things happen not in offices but in personal encounters.

11. New norms of procedure have been issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on 15th January 1971 (*AAS* 63, pp. 234-236). The defence of the author is entrusted to a "relator pro auctore", chosen by the Congregation; no advocate is forseen, chosen by the author himself (n. 2). Only the relator has the right to see all the documents concerning the case (n. 6). Where it seems necessary, the author can be invited to a colloquy with a group of theologians appointed by the Congregation (n. 13), the report of which interview, signed by the theologians and the author, is to be submitted to the Congregation (n. 14) for its decision (n. 15). It is with this interview that H. Küng refused to comply, objecting to the entire procedure. While E. Schillebeeckx responded to a similar invitation and declared himself satisfied with his colloquy with the theologians appointed by the Congregation, he nevertheless expressed his disagreement with the procedure to be followed thereafter: the Congregation will decide the case on the basis of the report, without having heard him.

The Dutch Synod

More important for the life of the Church at large is another event, the Synod of the Dutch bishops in Rome, 14th to 31st January 1980. A renewed vision of the Church had emerged from the Council, focused not on the clergy but on the entire people of God with the recognition of the dignity and mission of the laity in Church and world. Offices in the Church are "ministries", in the service of God's people. The supreme and full authority over the universal Church rests in the college of bishops together with their head, the pope.¹²

At the beginning of a new pontificate in the post-conciliar era the question arises how this renewed vision is being put into practice: How will the collegial authority be exercised? How will the ministry of priests be conceived? What will be the real place of the laity? The Dutch Synod is therefore important not only for the Netherlands, but for the whole Church as it may indicate the style of Church life envisaged for the future.

The Church in Holland should not be considered an exception, a deviation from the situation and life of other local Churches. Rather it reveals the development of the Church under the irreversible impact of secular culture, as it is found in various degrees all over the world, hastened, however, in Holland for special reasons. Therefore the problems of the Dutch Church will have to be faced also in other parts of the world, and the way of dealing with them may set a pattern of universal significance.

The Dutch Church is characterized by a highly developed laity which today is involved in Church activities more than ever before. It has also become very vocal through the mass media. The strong influence of the laity is part of the culture of the Netherlands with their age-old democratic traditions. It is highly polarized, with at times extreme positions on both the conservative and the progressive side. Polarization has also entered into the hierarchy through the nomination of conservative bishops, J. Simonis of Rotterdam and J. M. Gijzen of Roermond.

Changes in Holland are more radical than elsewhere, at times alarming. In 1965 the number of priests ordained was 237 while in the same year 45 left the priesthood. In 1972 only 26 were ordained and 148 left. 1977 had only 16 ordinations. Mass attendance in 1960 was 70-75%, in 1979 only 27%. Obviously the priestly ministry and the pastoral care for the communities constitute major problems.

12. *Lumen Gentium*, n. 22.

Members of the Synod in Rome were originally to include: the Pope, the seven Dutch bishops, Bishop G. Daneels of Antwerp, two major religious superiors, Fr J. Lescauwert (special secretary), Archbishop J. Tomko (secretary of the Synod of Bishops) and Cardinal W. Rubin. Shortly before the Synod opened it was announced that the pope had invited six of the Cardinal Presidents of Roman Congregations to attend, taking part in all the discussions and voting "in matters related to their respective competencies".

From the many spheres of Church life which were dealt with in the Synod, we reflect here on three only which seem of special significance for the understanding of authority in the Church: the role of the hierarchy, the priestly ministry, the place of the laity.

From the outset it was clear that the Synod had to re-assert episcopal and papal authority in a situation which seemed confused. A hierarchy which is disunited cannot function properly. The individual bishop needs the support of his brother bishops, especially in a country which is comparatively small and has a closely knit network of communications. Bishops also need the strengthening support of the Pope. Hence the persistent emphasis in the final document¹³ on the responsibility of the hierarchy: Bishops are "not delegates of the faithful but ministers of Jesus Christ in the service of the ecclesial community" (art. 3). They must be closely united and follow a common policy, though the bishops frankly admit "the particularly difficult problem to reconcile the exercise of their own office within their diocese and their adherence to the directions of the conference or the majority of its members" (art. 4). At the same time the local Church must be integrated into the universal Church; this will be better achieved through frequent and intense communication with the Roman Congregations (art. 12).

Thus the Synod bases itself firmly on the Council doctrine, the collegiality of Church authority consisting of the united body of the bishops closely linked with the Pope. Still, the question remains which trend prevailed in the Synod: the search for answers to the local needs and challenges, or the desire for a closer alignment of the Dutch Church with the universally accepted patterns of Church life? The need to strengthen the ties with Rome is forcefully urged in the final document as it was already emphasized by the very set up of the Synod: Rome as the venue, the participation of Curia Cardinals, the almost continuous presence of the Pope himself. The question arises whether the Church model, which underlies the resolutions, does not lean too

13. The final document consists of 46 articles, plus three "additional dispositions". See *Osservatore Romano* (English edition), 11 February 1980, pp. 4-8.

heavily on uniformity, with little acceptance of a legitimate pluralism in the life of the local Churches.

The most crucial issue in the deliberations was the renewal of the priestly ministry. The rapidly dwindling number of ordinations and the great number of priests leaving the ministry creates a serious problem. Seminaries had been closed though one was later opened at Rolduc by bishop Gijsen, on strictly traditional lines. Most theology students, who are enrolled at the universities, do not prepare themselves for the priesthood but for the exercise of ministries as lay people. Vacancies in the parishes are filled by "pastoral workers", mostly married men, who for all practical purposes guide the communities except in the celebration of the Eucharist. In many cases married priests carry out the pastoral ministry as "pastoral workers". Clear orientation was needed.

The line chosen by the Synod consists in a call for a concerted effort to re-establish the traditional structures of the priestly ministry. The Synod sharply reacts against the frequent trend to minimize "the essential difference between the ministerial or sacramental priesthood and the common priesthood of the baptized" (art. 17), and pledges itself to be "watchful over the practical consequences deriving from it" (ibid.). As to the growing number and influence of "pastoral workers", the Synod refuses to give them a status analogous to that of priests: There can be "no question of envisaging a new office or ministry... or a permanent function of global significance", as must be avoided "the creation of a parallel 'clergy' presenting itself as an alternative to the priesthood and the diaconate" (art. 36).

With regard to the problem of married priests, the bishops unanimously express their readiness "to follow faithfully the decision of the Popes to maintain the rule of celibacy", in the hope "to find the sufficient number of priests", with "trust in the Lord of the harvest" (art. 21). They express their common determination to embark on a campaign to foster priestly vocations (art. 22). Seminaries will have to be re-established which will care for the spiritual and priestly formation of candidates to the priesthood, even if they have to do their studies at public universities.

Only history will tell the outcome of these decisions. One may safely assume that a common and lasting effort to renew the traditional forms of priesthood will bear some fruit. Whether, however, at this late hour it will still be possible to provide through those means a sufficient number of priests remains to be seen. The trust "in the Spirit, that the gift of celibacy be liberally granted by the Father",

since it is "so appropriate to the priesthood of the New Testament", had already been expressed in Vatican II.¹⁴ The same confidence has been renewed in the Encyclical *Sacerdotii Coelibatus* (1967) and in the Roman Synod (1971). The real question is not whether celibacy is appropriate for priesthood — we should trust that there will always be celibate priests — but whether it is right rigorously to keep up a tradition of the Latin Church at the risk of no longer fulfilling the divine precept that Christian communities must be able to celebrate the Eucharist. This is being questioned more and more. For Germany it is calculated that by 1987 there will be 3000 priests less — they will be replaced by pastoral workers. Yet, in a pastoral conference Professor H. Fries (Munich) pleads: "It is a contradiction in terms to speak of a parish without a parish priest. A priest can be replaced only by another priest."¹⁵ The problem is worldwide and has different forms in various regions.¹⁶ Far-reaching changes cannot be made suddenly, but must be tried out. The Dutch Synod, confronted as it was with the acute problem of the Netherlands, could have opened a door. One should not say that any step would be too dangerous as it would create a precedent with consequences for the whole Church. Rather it would have been a first step, which would have shown the way to deal with similar situations in other countries.

The third main concern of the Synod was the laity. Its involvement in the Church activities had increased to unprecedented proportions. One counted an average of 129 voluntary workers per parish, most parishes having an administrative board, a parish council, a liturgical committee. This active participation of the laity in parish life was highly appreciated in the Synod. On the other hand the bishops complained that some vocal groups have become so powerful as to make the guidance of the bishops difficult. The Synod sees the need to counteract groups which "sometimes exercise excessive pressure on the life of the Church" (art. 34). As for the pastoral workers, the Synod does not envisage any new structure of ministries; it does not even conceive of new lay ministries analogous to those of 'reader' and 'acolyte'. The status of laymen working in and for the Church thus

14. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 16.

15. See *The Tablet*, 8 March 1980, p. 243.

16. The conclusions of the Research Seminar on Ministries, held in Bangalore, 1976, and the Pastoral Consultation that followed have suggested, for certain areas, new forms of the priestly ministry emerging from the ministry of catechists. If better prepared, catechists could, after adequate experience and testing be ordained deacons, and eventually priests. "The Holy Eucharist presided over by this presbyter will celebrate the life of a community that has reached full maturity. This presbyter could well be a married man who normally will continue to exercise his secular profession. His pastoral involvement will be at the level of the basic community". See Conclusions of the Research Seminar, n. 63 in D. S. AMALORPAVADASS (ed.) *Ministries in the Church in India*, New Delhi, CBCI Centre, 1976, p. 536.

remains undefined; clarifications are left to be worked out by a post-synodal commission.

Here obviously the Synod was caught in a difficult dilemma: either to keep the leadership and responsibility for the Church in the hands of the ordained ministry, or in the spirit of the Council to call on the entire people of God to unfold the gifts of the Spirit and to take their full share in the life and mission of the Church. It seems that a comprehensive rethinking of the entire ministry of the Church will be needed, in tune with the changed social and cultural situation of our age. Such a broad task was, obviously beyond the scope of a special Synod whose task was to settle on immediate and concrete solutions. Much will depend on the way the dilemma is actually resolved in the future. The problem is not merely theological—the danger of re-clergifying the life of the Church; real social and economic issues are involved. Pastoral workers have formed themselves into a union which is bound to defend their rights.

The Dutch bishops foresaw that it would be difficult to take the decisions of the Synod to their people. Some feared a new estrangement between hierarchy and laity. In a joint pastoral letter after the Synod they assured the faithful that their suggestions have been helpful “even if you cannot recognize your own ideas in the Synod’s conclusions”. They asked for loyal collaboration in carrying out the new directives, “even if you find it difficult to understand some of the decisions”.¹⁷

Conclusion

It is not for this article to speculate about eventual future developments; its task was to reflect on the meaning of authority and its exercise in the Church. Authority will always have to search for the proper balance between firmness and freedom, guidance and spontaneous growth, unity and pluralism. There is no clear cut formula for a solution. In every situation those in authority have to discern God’s guidance in responsibility and openness. The future of the Church is God’s; but it is also ours, for God guides his people through their free decisions.

17. *The Tablet*, 16 February 1980, p. 169. First reactions to the Synod are found in *The Tablet*, 8 March 1980, p. 232.

Participation of Lay People in Church Decisions

Jose M. DE MESA*

VATICAN II will be remembered for a number of things. The heavy slant it gave to the pastoral needs of today's Church has been truly remarkable. The absence of polemics which has coloured a number of previous councils in the past is very noticeable. For example, in contrast to the Council of Trent, which projected to the world an image of a fortress Church, isolated, closed and defensive, Vatican II opened the windows of the Church to let fresh air in. It advocated solidarity with the world to whom she is meant to be a sign, openness to the world from whom she can also learn, and collaboration with the world with whom she is a partner for the well-being of people. Perhaps, one can surmise that Vatican II will also be remembered for its unsure but bold steps towards a more positive view on the role of lay men and women in the Church.

1. *The Challenge of Contemporary Thought*

Recent developments in ecclesiological reflection are pointing towards the appropriateness of a more democratic manner of making decisions in the Church today. The FABC-sponsored "Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church", held in Hong Kong in 1977, mentions that "basic Christian communities are raising questions about leadership styles in the Church." In view of this "bishops and priests must learn to listen to the voice of their people." Indeed, "the local Christian community leaders have also to develop a style of leadership that fits the culture, attitudes and values of their local situation." If all groups of Christians are challenged "to ask whether or not they are true Christian communities shaped in the pattern given in the Acts of the Apostles",¹ their response ought to take note that "the acts of the Church are always the acts of the whole Church, not of its officers.

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1. Pedro S. DE ACHUTEGUI, S.J. (ed.), *Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church* (Manila: Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, 1977), pp. 33-34, 52.

The Apostolic Church was a true assembly."² In answer to this, the colloquium proposes:

We believe that *shared participative leadership* can be promoted as a style for our Basic Christian Communities where there is consultation, dialogue and sharing. Thus the people will feel responsible for and part of the decision-making process in matters that affect the whole community.³

This development is understandable because an ever-increasing number of men and women are becoming aware that "they themselves are the artisans and authors of the culture of their community. Throughout the world there is a similar growth in the combined sense of independence and responsibility" (G.S., 55). Consequently, "praise is due to those national procedures which allow the largest possible number of citizens to participate in public affairs with genuine freedom" (G.S., 31). If the Church encourages this style of leadership in society, why can she not implement it within herself? Will she allow her actions to belie what she preaches? It is clear that our era challenges all of us, "the whole people of God to be more fully involved, more participative, more outward looking, more responsive and more self-giving, thereby bringing about a style of leadership that underscores genuine co-responsibility."⁴ I would like to suggest that the biblical view of the one people of God, which Vatican II restored to its place of importance, gives us a theologically sound basis for a relevant answer to such a challenge.

2. *The Laity in the Church: Yesterday and Today*

a. *Misconceptions about the Laity*

We need not trace here the unfortunate development of a very clerical ecclesiology that hardly rendered justice to the dignity and responsibility of the laity. It is important, however, to be aware of the rather widespread misconceptions that have served as basis for pastoral policies and practices up till the Second Vatican Council.

First of all, the all too direct and explicit statement from the schema of Vatican I is illustrative of the mentality that has influenced the theological climate prior to Vatican II. It states that

... The Church of Christ is not a community of equals in which all the faithful have the same rights. It is a society of unequals, not only because among the faithful some are clerics and some are laymen, but particularly because there is in the Church the power from God whereby to some it is given to sanctify, teach, and govern, and to others not.⁵

2. John L. McKENZIE, S.J., "The Gospel According to Matthew," in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Vol. II, ed. by Joseph A. FITZMYER, S.J. and Raymond E. BROWN, S. S. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 95.

3. DE ACHUTEGUI, op. cit., p. 34.

4. Ibid., p. 52.

5. Josef NEUNER, S.J. and Heinrich ROSS, S.J., *The Teaching of the Catholic Church* (Cork: The Mercier Press, 1967), pp. 219-220.

With such a picture of first and second class members in the Church, it is hardly surprising to discover that lay people have no other right in the Church than to be led by their pastors. In the words of Pope Pius X's encyclical *Vehementer nos* (1906):

The college of pastors alone has the right and the authority to lead and guide all the members toward the goal of the community. The majority have the duty to let themselves be led, and follow the shepherds like an obedient flock.

While lay people were conveniently dropped out of the picture of responsibility for the Church and her mission as Church, it was also said that lay men and women were responsible for bringing the world back to Christ. So while the clergy took care of the Church, the world was the lay persons' area of responsibility, naturally, under the prudent guidance of the clergy. That was to be their task as members of the Church.

b. A. Renewal of Attitudes

If one would characterize Vatican II theologically, one sure characteristic would be its representing an ecclesiological breakthrough for the laity. The Council exploded many theological misconceptions by a series of affirmations based on the principle, One People of God. We read in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) the following:

Therefore, the chosen People of God is one: "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4: 5). As members they share a common dignity from their birth in Christ. They have the same filial grace and the same vocation to perfection. They possess in common one salvation, one hope, and one undivided charity. Hence, there is in Christ and in the Church no inequality on the basis of race or nationality, social condition or sex, because "there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female. For you are all 'one' in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3: 28; cf. Col 3: 11) (n. 32, emphasis added).

Having stated the fundamental equality of every member of the Church, be he a cleric, religious or lay person, "for you are all 'one' in Christ Jesus", the Constitution puts forth a second affirmation:

If therefore, everyone in the Church does not proceed by the same path, nevertheless all are called to sanctity and have received an equal privilege of faith through the justice of God (cf. 2 Pet 1: 1). And if by the will of Christ some are made teachers, dispensers of mysteries, and shepherds on behalf of others, yet all share a true equality with regard to the dignity and to the activity common to all the faithful for the building up of the Body of Christ (n. 32, emphasis added).

So there is not only equality with respect to the *dignity of being* a Christian and a member of the Church, but also in the *activity common* to all the faithful for the welfare of the Church. Therefore, equality in the one community implies coresponsibility for the Church's mission — with respect to the Church herself (*ad intra*) and with respect to the world (*ad extra*).

But lest there be misunderstanding concerning this double-faceted mission of the Church, let it be clear that this is not two missions, each of which may be relegated to a particular group in the Church. It is the one and the same mission with a double aspect. The Church, after all, is the sacrament and instrument for intimate union with God, and for the unity of all mankind (*L.G.*, 1). This incarnational integration of human effort and world history in Christ (in the light of Eph 1:10) rules out any dualism which would divide the two orders, juxtapose Church and world as if indifferent to each other, or blur the newly won vision of the unity of the Church. Consequently, the Church cannot be divided into specialists for natural things (the laity) and the experts for supernatural matters (the clergy). Moreover, the Council has explicitly said that the laity "carry out their own part in the mission of the whole Christian people with respect to the Church and to the world" (*L.G.*, 33). This really means that Vatican II has implicitly rejected the theologically unsound splitting up of the double-faceted mission of the Church and the assigning of each aspect to a specific group. Being a Christian in the Church means to be co-responsible for the Church's mission. So both laity and clergy are responsible for the Church and her mission in the world, for it is only in being Church that this community becomes a sign and instrument of saving unity in the world (cf. *L.G.*, 9). Put in another way, the Church *becomes* Church in and through mission.⁷ The Church *is*, indeed, mission. And this mission is a ministry, a service both within and outside the Christian community.

Hopeful as the vision of Vatican II might be, the reality does not allow for pure optimism. For while the biblical view of the one people of God was restored in principle, its vision did not penetrate completely into the Council and elements of the older antithesis between the clergy and the laity are still discernible in the conciliar documents. For instance, the priest is still primarily for the Church, even though he can also at times engage in secular activities (e.g. *L.G.*, 31). What characterizes the lay person, on the other hand, is his involvement in

7. See L. WOSTYN, CICM, "The Missionary Mandate of the Church", *The Japan Missionary Bulletin* 5 (1978), pp. 231-238, 250; see pp. 236-237.

the world, although he also has an essential function in the Church.⁸ In other words, the de clericalization of the Church in the Council was not completely successful. The pressure of a thousand years of tradition was too strong for this. A sustained theological effort to spell out the implications of the biblical view is definitely called for.

A decisive point to develop this subject further is the issue of joint decision-making of both clergy and laity. I would like to concentrate here on this one issue.

3 *The Laity and Decision-Making in the Church*

a. *Communality of Decisions in the Church: Why Not ?*

After rectifying the misconceptions mentioned above concerning the status and role of the laity in the Church, we come to a more positive point which is a further development or implication of the basic insight of the Council on the Church as the "One People of God". The primary element in our ecclesiological discussions must always be the one Christian quality common to all and the mission given to all. It must permeate our theological reflection and practical decisions and be the framework within which all differences between various services in the church are discussed.

The years after the Council have witnessed to a renewed vigour of ministries. The Research Seminar and Pastoral Consultation on "Ministries in the Church in India" (1976)⁹ and the Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church attest to this development. More and more lay men and women are becoming truly active participants in the ministry of the Church towards her own members and to others to whom she is a sign. As a matter of fact, conciliar ecclesiology has, in a sense, finally caught up with this growth as is reflected in her theology.

In the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*) the Council has already boldly asserted that the laity "share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ" and that from there they "have their own role to play in the mission of the whole People of God in the Church and in the world" (A.A., 2). It is clear from this that the movement known as Catholic Action, in which lay people merely shared in the threefold task of the hierarchy to teach, govern and sanctify, has already been transcended by Vatican II. Despite the measure of success it has had by providing both impetus

8. Cf. Edward SCHILLEBEECKX, *The Mission of the Church* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1973), pp. 124, 129.

9. Cf. D. S. AMALORPAVADASS (ed.), *Ministries in the Church in India* (New Delhi: C.B.C.I. Centre, 1976).

and outlet for the "apostolic itch" of lay men and women, Catholic Action must decrease so as to allow lay participation in the Church and her mission to the world to grow in its own right. Filipino Bishop Miguel Purugganan writes:

What we should be most concerned with nowadays is not the promotion of the hierarchy's work, in the manner, say, of Catholic Action. What should concern us more is to promote the Christian witness and apostolate of the bulk of the Christian community, namely, the laity.¹⁰

Vatican II was not satisfied with saying that the laity are truly co-responsible for the Church's mission; it further affirmed that if the laity's presence in the Church is not felt, the local Christian community cannot be said to have been truly established. In the words of the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (*Ad Gentes*):

The Church has not been truly established and is not yet fully alive, nor is it a perfect sign of Christ among men, unless there exists a laity worthy of the name, working along with the hierarchy. For the Gospel cannot be deeply imprinted on the talents, life, and work of any people without the active presence of laymen (*A.G.*, 21).

Hence, it is readily understandable why the Church would insist that "even in the very founding of a Church, the greatest attention is to be paid to raising up a mature Christian laity" (*A.G.*, 21). And as though it had not said enough, the document again asserts that "the lay faithful *fully* belong... to the People of God" (*A.G.*, 21).

It should be obvious by now that *full* participation in the Church's life and task is confirmed by conciliar ecclesiology. But while lay men and women are enthusiastically encouraged to be involved in the life of the Church, and to participate actively in the decisions of the world (cf. among other texts, *G.S.*, 31, 43, 65, 68, 75), the Decree specifically dedicated to the laity is silent on the question of lay participation in the decisions of the Church (the whole people of God!). And it is precisely here that the question of the status of both lay men and women meets its acid test. For, as long as I can contribute advice and work but am excluded from decision-making, I remain, no matter how many fine things are said about my status (and there are many!), a second class member of this community. By decision-making I mean really making decisions, and not just offering advice, suggestions and recommendations all of which, it must be acknowledged, are part and parcel of the decision-making process. If the mission of the Church

10. Bishop Miguel PURUGGANAN, "The Lay Apostolate After Vatican II", *Philippine Priests' Forum* X:4 (December, 1978), pp. 24-29. Bishop Purugganan is emphatic about the necessity of putting to an end "the effective monopoly and domination of the Church by the clergy and religious, who compose less than one-tenth per cent of the Church". He says that "what is more needed today is that the laity be allowed and encouraged to take their rightful place and role within the Church".

is truly my mission too, truly my responsibility as a full member of that Church, then how can it be that I am not included in decisions affecting that mission?¹¹

After *Lumen Gentium* (nn. 31-33) and *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (n. 2) have laid out the basis for joint decision-making of laity and clergy in the Church, one misses a very important consequence of the principle of unity and equality in the one Church.¹² This fundamental collegiality and co-responsibility of the one People of God does not come through when actual decision-making in the Church is spoken of.¹³ Was this a blind-spot, a by-product of the clericalism (a mentality found among clerics and lay persons alike) that had developed in the Church?

For if the community of all those in the Church goes so deep that even differences of gift and services find their purpose in such oneness (cf. *L.G.*, 32), then why, considering the communality of the one Lord, of the one Spirit and the one Body, of one hope and love, and finally of one responsibility and task, is there not also in the Church a *communality of decision*?

If we are, moreover, in earnest when we speak of Christian brotherhood and the equality of the members of the local Church, a move towards a far-reaching democratization of the structures of the Church is called for. A democratization like this would not only be consonant with a genuine stream of Christian tradition in the Church¹⁴ and current ecclesiology, but also with the mentality and structures of contemporary secular society. Conforming to these should not be looked upon as a concession made by a self-sufficient Church to the modern mentality, but rather as a humble admission of a pilgrim Church that is ready to listen and learn, too. Vatican II, in fact, was not afraid

11. "Authority in the New Testament is conceived in a way which must be called democratic rather than absolute. *Authority in the Church belongs to the whole Church and not to particular officers* . . . Both the idea and the use of authority in the New Testament show no signs of rigorous control of the members by authority. Since the mission of the Church is the responsibility of all the members of the Church, all members have a concern in the exercise of authority." John L. MCKENZIE, S.J. *Authority in the Church* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), p. 85.

12. Cf. Mrs Theodore O. WEDEL, "A Response" to *Apostolicam Actuositatem* in *The Documents of Vatican II*, edited by Walter M. ABBOTT, S.J. (New York: Guild Press, 1966), . 524.

13. Article 10 of *Apostolicam Actuositatem* may be an exception to this: "The laity should accustom themselves to working in the parish in close union with their priests, bringing to the Church community their own and the world's problems as well as questions concerning human salvation, all of which should be *examined and resolved by common deliberation*" (emphasis added).

14. See Charles E. CURRAN and George J. DYER (eds), *Shared Responsibility in the Local Church* (Catholic Theological Society of America, 1970). Shared responsibility in the New Testament and in the early Church are among the topics discussed in the book.

to say that "since the Church has a visible and social structure as a sign of her unity in Christ, *she can and ought to be enriched by the development of human social life*" (G.S., 44; emphasis added). One thing ought to be clear: one cannot speak of co-responsibility of the laity if their participation in decision-making is not realized. The call of the laity to co-responsibility and care for the local Church has meaning only if they are assured *in concrete* a genuine role in the decisions of the local Christian community. If, however, this is not the case, the possibility of regarding such summons as a farce is high. A question that ought to be asked by those who often complain about lay people's indifference to active participation in the apostolate (i.e. the Mission of the Church as in A.A., 25) is whether lay people have been given their rightful place in the decision-making structures of the Church. For only under this condition of genuine participation in decision-making will it be possible in the long run to integrate the laity into the Church in any authentic way.

b. The Office of Leadership within the One People of God

It may be objected that, although the laity are, together with the clergy, fully equal participants in the life and mission of the Church, still the two are not identical. There remains a difference because "each of them in its own special way is a participation in the priesthood of Christ" (L.G., 10). Would not the laity be usurping a function that is not theirs by sharing in the decision-making in the Church?

That the laity are distinguished from the hierarchy and the religious state is undeniable. However, they are so distinguished *not by a lesser participation* in the life of the Church and her mission, but by their manner of being Christian in the world, as is clear, for instance, from the description of the laity in *Lumen Gentium* (n. 31), and from the repeated stress on the calling and dignity common to all.¹⁵ After all, it was not for nothing that prior to any treatment of specific groups within the Church, it is the whole which is considered.

This is why the orientation of the ecclesiology of Vatican II clashes against partisanship within the Church on the one hand, and promotes brotherhood on the other: it goes against the grain of clericalism

15. "Every form of being a Christian, in whatever kind of service or function in the Church (either lay or clerical), is a manner of being a Christian in the world. Even religious life cannot be interpreted in any other way than as a specific manner of being in the world. The Church is the 'universal sacrament of salvation' (G.S., 45), the sign of salvation in and for the world. All Christians are implicated in this sign, each according to his own service or function in the Church." E. SCHILLEBECKX, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

where clerics control the Church as though they were the only ones responsible; and against that of laicism where the laity claims full control of the Church. The fact of being one community united in love cannot be disregarded without serious consequences on the life of the Church.

It is a fact that when men turn aside from community life they spontaneously organize themselves into classes, even into all kinds of castes. This is a historical fact . . . The community itself has never known classes, social or otherwise, and yet it has always recognized the need of a leader or a group of leaders who, while having extensive powers, are first of all brothers among their brothers. The tensions between episcopate and presbyterate, episcopate and laity, presbyterate and laity, are typical of a Church somewhat "decommunalized."¹⁶

By affirming the right and responsibility of the laity to participate in the decisions of the Church, I am not implying in any way that the special apostolic succession of the diverse pastoral service (office of leadership) is thereby negated and abolished. On the contrary. It is affirmed and situated in its proper context, namely the one People of God, the one Church wherein every member, whether lay, religious or cleric, is responsible for the mission of the Church. For it should be borne in mind that the Church *as a whole*, and therefore each individual Church member, stands in succession to the apostles. *Credo ecclesiam apostolicam*, we confess in the Nicea-Constantinople Creed. The reason is that all of us in the Church are bound to the basic witness and service of the original witnesses, without which there would be no Church. It follows, therefore, that all the faithful are supposed to succeed the apostles in apostolic faith and witness, life and service.

Within this framework of apostolicity of the entire Church, the special apostolic succession of ecclesial leadership must be affirmed. This office continues the special task of the apostles of establishing and guiding the local Churches. This service of guiding the Church confers on the office-bearers (bishops, priests, further co-workers) a special authority; but it is only in service that their authority can have any foundation at all.¹⁷ In no way can the leaders of the Christian community be considered as a management class with unilateral imperial power. For if this were so, the only proper response lay men and women could give to them is obedience. This would bring us back to the ecclesiology of Vatican I and *Vehementer nos*.

16. Max DELESPESE, *The Church Community: Leaven and Life-Style* (Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1968), pp. 100-101.

17. Cf. the study of H. HENDRICKX, CICM, "Matthew and the Church", *The Japan Missionary Bulletin* 10 (1978), pp. 532-539. See also Xavier KOODAPUZLA, "Nature of Authority in the Church" in Amalorpavadas (ed.), op. cit., 165-172.

The issue of authority in the Church, however, is very clear in the Gospel according to Mark (10: 42-45) where we read Jesus saying:

You know that among the pagans their so-called rulers lord it over them, and their great men make their authority felt. *This is not to happen among you.* No; anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be slave to all. For the Son of Man himself did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

The leaders of the community are told by Jesus that they have no *dominium* in the community but rather a *ministerium*. Servanthood and service must not only be understood attitudinally but structurally as well; they form no power structure but a special service structure.

The end for which appointed leaders exist in the Church, is service to the apostolic Church. In the words of Vatican II:

For the nurturing and constant growth of the People of God, Christ the Lord instituted in his Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body. For those ministers who are endowed with sacred power are servants of their brethren, so that all who are of the People of God, and therefore enjoy a true Christian dignity, can work toward a common goal freely and in an orderly way, and arrive at salvation (L.G., 18).¹⁸

The term "hierarchy" or "holy rule" (customary only since the time of Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, five hundred years after Christ) is in this context inappropriate. It would be more biblical to speak of *diakonia* or *Church service*.

We can conclude from this that the Council wishes to emphasize the service structure of ordained leadership. But if from both biblical and conciliar perspectives the leaders are not the masters but the servants of the community (=laity), is it not rather strange that those who are served are excluded from joint decision-making?

c. Shared Responsibility in Decision-Making as Dialogical

We have taken the implication of the principle of one people of God for decision-making seriously. We should do no less with regard to the diversity and flexibility of services and to the special fullness of power of the pastoral office. A question particularly important for our subject is the relation of the community (=laity) leadership to the special office of leadership in the Church. At this juncture, we might be helped by some insights from Scripture. We shall merely indicate the key points of two texts that have a bearing on our discussion: 1 Corinthians 5 and Matthew 18.

18. Yves CONGAR notes that "Vatican II does not speak of 'potestas ordinis' and 'potestas jurisdictionis'; it unites both in the phrase 'sacra potestas,' which denotes a pastoral reality: not a power in itself, but a commission and authority related to the *ecclesia*." See "Ministry in the Early Church and Subsequent Historical Evolution", in DE ACHUTEGUI (ed.), op. cit., p. 354.

1 Corinthians is a fitting source because this letter reflects the Pauline teaching about the local Church.¹⁹ For our purpose we shall focus our attention on the passage where Paul gives directives for the expulsion of the incestuous man (1 Cor 5). Paul, having heard that a member of the Christian community is living in an incestuous relationship, rebukes the community for its complacency. 1 Cor 5:3-5 states a decision:

And even though I am far away from you in body, still I am there with you in spirit; and as though I were there with you, I have in the name of our Lord Jesus already passed judgment on the man who has done this terrible thing. As you meet together, and I meet with you in my spirit, by the power of our Lord Jesus present with us, you are to hand this man over to Satan for his body to be destroyed, so that his spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord.

There are differences of opinion with regard to the interpretation of this passage. On the one hand, some maintain that the community merely constitutes the forum but does not share in the decision.²⁰ On the other hand, there are those who say that Paul does not simply impose his will as an apostle on the local Church of Corinth. Rather, he urges them, strongly to be sure, to make a solemn judgment of their own and thus to assume the responsibility for the expulsion of the notorious sinner.²¹ In the last analysis it is the community that counts.

Perhaps, without compromising the exegesis of this passage, one can posit with George MacRae that it illustrates best of all "the practice of shared responsibility which rests on the interaction between Paul and the Corinthians, between apostolic authority and local communitarian decision-making".²²

Our second text is from Matthew's Gospel. In the well-known "church-order" passage in chapter 18, we find another illustration of shared responsibility in the local Church. Mt 18:15-17 describes the procedure for dealing with offences within the local Church community. The disciplinary action taken by the community (*ekklesia*) amounts

19. George W. MACRAE, S.J., "Shared Responsibility — Some New Testament Perspectives", in E. Curran and J. Dyer (eds), op. cit., pp. 3-15.

20. For instance, Hans CONZELMANN, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 97.

21. MACRAE, art. cit., p. 8: "In the text Paul's emphasis on the solemnity of the proceeding, on the fact that the power and authority of Christ resides in the assembled community and on his own spiritual presence in the assembly strongly suggests that the decisive act is not his judgment but that of the community." See also Elizabeth SCHUSSLER-FIORENZA, "Judging and Judgment in the New Testament Communities", *Concilium*, "Judgment in the Church", edited by William BASSER and Peter HUIZING (New York: The Seabury Press, 1977), pp. 1-8, especially p. 6.

22. MACRAE, art. cit., p. 8. Cf. also Rudolf SCHNACKENBURG, "Community Cooperation in the New Testament", *Concilium* VIII. 8 (September, 1972), pp. 9-19, especially pp. 15-16.

really to an expulsion that is similar in principle to the action urged by Paul in 1 Cor 5:

And if he will not listen to them, then tell the whole thing to *the Church*. Finally, if he will not listen to the Church, treat him as though he were a pagan or a tax collector (Mt 18: 17).

We are not interested here in the actual details of the juridical procedure of such disciplinary action, but rather in the fact that it was the *entire* community that had to make the decision. But while it was a community decision and the responsibility for it was shared in the *ekklesia*, the context suggests that this shared responsibility "depends on an interaction between the hierarchical leadership of the universal church and the local community itself".²³

It cannot be denied, first of all, that the whole discourse where the passage under discussion is situated is addressed to "the disciples". But this does not mean that "the power of binding and loosing" (Mt 18: 18)²⁴ could be the sole prerogative of the ordained leaders of the Church. To affirm this would mean ignoring the significance of the redactional activity of the Evangelist who, by inserting the saying at this point of the discourse, clearly links it to the disciplinary action of the community. Moreover, in the Gospel of Matthew the meaning of "disciples" cannot be restricted to the Twelve, as is shown by the injunction found in Mt 28: 19 to "make *disciples* of all nations".

On the other hand, the role of Peter and the service of Petrine primacy are highlighted in the same Gospel. For in Mt 16: 19 the same power of binding and loosing is promised to Peter as leader and spokesman for the disciples, on the occasion of his confession of Christ. It would be a logical and legitimate conclusion to say that Matthew uses the key saying about binding and loosing in both these contexts, to point out and to emphasize the *interaction* between hierarchical and communitarian authority in the Church.²⁵

In this interaction between pastoral (that of the ordained leaders) and communitarian authority three principles, applicable to lay people and clerics alike, must be kept in mind. First, *to each his own*. Both the clergy and the laity have their particular contribution to make in

23. MACRAE, art. cit., pp. 9-10.

24. The phrase "binding and loosing" refers to the exercise of authority in general; but the nature and use of authority are not specified. However, it clearly means the force of "condemn" or "acquit" in this context. The whole assembly of the Church has the power given to Peter in 16: 19. Cf. J. L. MCKENZIE, art. cit., pp. 92-95.

25. MACRAE, art. cit., pp. 10-11. We ought to keep in mind that "the distinction which the Lord made between sacred ministers and the rest of the People of God entails a unifying purpose, since pastors and the other faithful are bound to each other by mutual need" (L.G., 32).

the Church and toward the advancement of her mission. Erasing the difference does not bring any advantage in the long run (cf. 1 Cor 12). If this principle is followed, the appointed leader will not assume a superiority over the community and vice-versa. Neither pastor nor laity will wish to lord it over and subordinate everything to themselves, but they will each give and relinquish what belongs to the other. The second principle, *with one another for one another*, orients both pastor and laity to use their gifts not for selfish reasons, but rather for serving one another and the whole Church. The supreme principle for co-responsibility is none other than *obedience to the Lord*. Guided by this criterion, neither pastor nor laity will want to arrogate to themselves the place of the Lord Jesus in the Church.²⁶

The joint decision-making of both clergy and laity would be a healthy perspective to avoid all absolutistic decision-making by either the pastors or the communities alone. But we cannot leave the matter at that. The special office of the presiding officers in the Church must also be taken very seriously. This particular office is the special vocation of individual believing persons to the permanent and regular, public service to the community as such through the laying on of hands or ordination. A special authority emanates from this special *diakonia*, and this cannot simply be eliminated or passed over in the Church. Together with the conclusions of the FABC-sponsored Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church, it could be said that the heart of this service is one of *unifying spiritual leadership*, a leadership that evokes and harmonizes the different gifts of the Spirit in the local Church.²⁷ Nevertheless, the primacy of unity and equality within the community ought to make itself felt in this area of special service. Thus, the pastors only have their authority from this special ministry *within*, for and *in collaboration* with the whole Christian community. The appointed leaders are, from the very outset, oriented to joint collaboration, decision-making, and regulating of the community. This has been beautifully phrased in the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*: "By their vocation and ordination, priests of the New Testament are indeed *set apart* in a certain sense *within* the midst of God's people" (P.O., 3; emphasis added).²⁸

In conclusion, we can say that joint decision-making in the Church of both clergy and laity (the One People of God) is a consequence

26. Hans KÜNG, *The Church* (London: Search Press, 1971), p. 395.

27. DE ACHUTEGUI (ed.), op. cit., pp. 52-53.

28. One is reminded here of Augustine's "I am a bishop for your sake but I am a Christian together with you."

and reflection of the fundamental collegiality of the whole Church. It would do away with individual decisions on the part of the community and of the clergy. Rather than a going-it-alone, either of the laity without the pastor or of the pastor without the laity, there would be solidarity and unity. Sole control, that is either a dictatorship of the one or of the many, would have no place in the Church. Seclusion, isolation, paternalism and despotism would be replaced by service and love for others.

4. *Post-Conciliar Developments*

Vatican II has reminded us of the significance of the local Churches in ecclesiology. The 1974 Synod on evangelization made it one of its key topics. Together they have made local Christian communities aware of their responsibility of becoming a sign of saving unity in their own socio-cultural contexts. In connection with this, basic Christian communities are being established and developed. Different lay ministries are becoming recognized so that acknowledgement may be made and benefit derived from the many charisms the Spirit is giving to the Churches.

This recognition of charisms and the subsequent emergence of new lay ministries will affect our understanding and practice in the Church. Seeing that each person has his proper function and each one contributes to the building up of the body of Christ, the necessity of integrating all the faithful within the community will inevitably precipitate changes in the present ecclesiastical structures. Failure to respond to these developments would be tantamount to refusing the gifts God is giving to us. What a person offers is not simply a human gift, but a gift from the risen Christ and his Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 12: 11). "The Spirit's presence", says St Paul in 1 Cor 12: 7, "is shown in some way in each person for the good of all". To refuse these gifts would mean for the Church to deprive herself of enriching contributions for her growth. "These charismatic gifts, whether they be the most outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation, for they are exceedingly suitable and useful for the needs of the Church" (*L.G.*, 12).

A serious integration, therefore, will require that the richness of Christ be made manifest, and space be made for everyone, above all the poor, those who may possibly be overlooked and despised. Authority will definitely have a role to play in this regard, for it "exists to embody charity as the soul of every gift and as a way of communicating and harmonizing all the contributions and as a way of building the body of Christ. . . . It is the gift which unifies and ensures the harmony

of the entire community".²⁹ But just as everyone contributes to the building up of this body (the one People of God), everyone shares the burden of unifying and harmonizing all the gifts—this, too, is a service. If "there is urgent need for all ministries"³⁰ to be exercised in a team as a sign of co-responsibility and cooperation",³¹ team ministry will have to extend to the ministry of decision-making.

Developments like these require realistic and enlightened decisions, and the clergy cannot do this on their own. They are not the whole Church; they are not even the majority in the Church. It would really not be too much to ask that lay men and women participate in the actual decisions that have to be made concerning these and other developments, for the mission of the Church is truly their mission. As the old principle goes, *quod omnes tangit ab omnibus approbetur*: This need is particularly acute at this time when lay ministries are being discussed. If an orderly structuring of these ministries is to be a genuine contribution of lay men and women to the Church and her mission, then discussion and resolution must bear the stamp of the lay voice.

It is heartening to know that there are already stirrings in this direction, inspired, no doubt, by the Council. On the official level, the most prominent factor is the establishment within the Roman Curia of the Council of the Laity, in 1967, and its subsequent raising to permanent status as the Pontifical Council of the Laity, in 1976.³² In its by-laws three provisions are noteworthy in relation to our subject:

III: The majority of the members of this Pontifical Council shall be lay people, chosen from the various areas of the lay apostolate and with a due proportion of men and women.

IV: The Council shall seek the help of consultants who are noted for their virtue, learning and prudence. The experts shall be chosen with lay people in the majority and with men and women in equal numbers.

V: The consultants shall form a commission or committee, the function of which is to study in depth all matters on which the members of the Council must decide and to carry out faithfully the projects entrusted to them by those in charge.³³

29. Luigi SARTORI, "The Structure of Juridical and Charismatic Power in the Christian Community", *Concilium*, "Charisms in the Church," edited by Christian DUQUOUC and Casiano FLORISTAN (New York: The Seabury Press, 1978), p. 64.

30. "Charisms are enduring gifts of the Spirit given to Church members to be put to use in services and ministries. Endowed with them, different members render different services, thereby contributing, each in his or her own manner, to the Christian mission." See DE ACHUTEGUI (ed.) op. cit., p. 29.

31. "Team ministry will not become effective unless both clergy and laity have radically changed their attitudes." *Ibid.*, p. 53.

32. See Paul VI, "A New Form for the Council of the Laity," *The Pope Speaks* XXII: 1 (1977), pp. 26-29, especially p. 28.

33. *Ibid.*

Important also, especially for the Asian Region, are the Research Seminar and Pastoral Consultation on *Ministries in the Church in India* (1976) and the FABC-sponsored *Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church* (1977). The latter, as we have no ed, is emphatic on facing up to the challenge of "bringing about a style of leadership that underscores genuine co-responsibility". It speaks of "shared participative leadership" where women, too, share in "the decision-making processes of the Church", since they are "recognized as full partners and their sharing in the ministry is accepted as their duty and right". It does not come as a surprise, then, to learn that "team ministry" is urgently needed and highly desirable as "a sign of co-responsibility and co-operation".³⁴

But beginnings are beginnings. There is so much more to be done before lay people and clerics take this new vision seriously and act upon it. The basis has been solidly laid in Vatican II. And as with many other things, only an actual implementation can show us how shared participative leadership ought to be done. A concrete praxis of joint decision-making may be the best way to resolve the unresolved. Will we build on the principle of the one People of God, or would we rather return to a "perfect society" with two classes of members?

5. Is Participation of the Laity in Decision-Making a Fad?

One may, perhaps, wonder whether all this is just a faddish quest for relevance in which the Church, like the chameleon, changes to harmonize with her environment. If so, the identity of the Church is bound to suffer. After all, the Gospel is meant to touch and transform "the standards of judgment, the reigning values, the points of interest, the patterns of thinking, the motives and ideals of mankind which are now in disaccord with God's word and his plan of salvation".³⁵ With this in mind is it still possible to seriously contemplate an alternative way of structuring leadership in the Christian community? I think it is. For, the Church is not bound exclusively and indissolubly to any kind of social structure or customary pattern of living (cf. *G.S.*, 58), even within her own internal organization. Hence, there is really no reason why the democratization of structures and procedures for decision-making could not be put into practice.

Furthermore, it is even better to speak of a democracy (the entire holy People of God) than of a "hierocracy" (a holy caste). The New Testament shuns all worldly titles in connection with bearers of office,

34. See DE ACHUTEGUI, op. cit., *passim* in the "conclusions".

35. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, n. 19.

but honour is given to the entire believing people, which is designated "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation" (1 Pet 2: 9), and made "a line of kings and priests, to serve our God and to rule the world" (Rev 5: 10).³⁶ This is really saying that even the current praxis of the Church must be tested against the Gospel. For cooperation and co-responsibility of the whole community, so prominent in New Testament times, are indispensable elements in the life of the Church. Truly, the fundamental idea of "brotherhood" (One People of God) has to be seen as a constant call to Church renewal.

36. Hans KÜNG, *Signposts for the Future* (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1978), pp. 136-137.

Pastoral Aspects of Family Planning

Felix PODIMATTAM, O.F.M.Cap.

1. A Proper Understanding of Number 14 of *Humanae Vitae*

A LOT of confusion has crept into the pastoral care of the married people because of a misunderstanding regarding the supposed teaching of *Humanae Vitae* (hereafter HV) that contraception is a mortal sin. Even some of the dissenting theologians seem to have believed that Paul VI was condemning contraception as a serious sin in itself. They, therefore, felt obliged to oppose the papal teaching in order to save the faithful from the unbearable options of keeping away from the sacraments while continuing to have recourse to contraception, or abstaining from contraception in difficult situations and thus harming their marriage and their families, or of externally showing allegiance to the papal teaching while refusing to abide by it in individual cases. They appear to have forgotten that there is another option open to the faithful, namely, that of trying to understand what Paul VI taught regarding the gravity of contraception and thus frequenting the sacraments without rejecting his substantive teaching.

Did Paul VI condemn contraception as a serious sin? From a cursory reading of HV we might get the impression that the Pope did so and demanded confession before receiving Holy Communion. But such an impression is not founded.

1) It is true that HV characterizes contraception as "intrinsically disordered" and therefore as something that cannot be resorted to in order to achieve a good end.¹ In the mind of most people what is "intrinsically disordered" is equivalent to what is "objectively grave". But this identification is unwarranted. *Intrinsically disordered* merely means that some action is evil always and everywhere. Intrinsic disorder can be either grave or light. Stealing is intrinsically disordered; but stealing five paise from a rich man is light. HV only states that contraception is an intrinsic evil. But it does not state that contraception is a grave intrinsic evil.

1. *Humanae Vitae*, n. 14.

2) Paul VI says: "And if sin should still keep its hold over them, let them not be discouraged, but rather have recourse with humble perseverance to the mercy of God which is poured forth in the sacrament of penance".² From this statement it is clear that Pope Paul considers contraception to be sinful and therefore recommends frequent confession. But he doesn't make confession obligatory. The tenor of the above statement is hardly fitting for an advice to those who are guilty of grave sin.

3) If Paul VI wished to condemn contraception as gravely sinful, it was sufficient for him to confirm the teaching of his predecessor, Pius XI, who stated clearly in his encyclical *Casti Connubii* that contraception "is an offence against the law of God, and those who indulge in it are branded with the guilt of a grave sin".³

4) We have the support of the Holy See itself. In *L'Osservatore Romano* of May 20, 1971, the Congregation for the Clergy, 'acting at the instance of the Holy Father', issued the following statement:

The encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, which declares without ambiguity, doubt or hesitation the objective evil of the contraceptive act, is an authentic expression of this Magisterium and is to be understood in accord with the dogmatic tradition of the Church concerning the assent due to the teachings of the Ordinary Magisterium . . . Particular circumstances surrounding an objectively evil act, while they cannot make it objectively virtuous, can make it inculpable, diminished in guilt or subjectively defensible.⁴

The above statement of the Congregation for the Clergy highlighted the pastoral aspects of the moral norm set forth by Paul VI. Cardinal Villot, the then secretary of state, recommended it to the Australian hierarchy and Cardinal Seper of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith did the same to the Yugoslav hierarchy. This statement spells out officially the classical distinction between objective evil and subjective culpability. It can be said to be an authoritative interpretation of HV and several national hierarchies have made this interpretation their own.

What has been said thus far should not be misconstrued as to mean that objective wrongness is something that can be overlooked. A responsible conscience has to take this aspect into serious consideration. Otherwise it would be failing to live up to the challenge of moral norms, which would be demoralizing. Every moral problem is a call to moral growth.

2. Ibid., n. 25.

3. Cf. *Catholic Mind*, 29 (1931), p. 38.

4. Cf. *The Tablet*, 22 May 1971, p. 503. Italics added.

5) The national hierarchies, too, lend their support. They are unanimous in their teaching that contraception is evil in so far as it is a failure to live up to the ideal of conjugal chastity. No national hierarchy has taught that contraception is a serious sin in itself. Indeed, the statements of the hierarchies at least implicitly rule out the possibility of such a sin, except in cases where there is extreme selfishness.

The Austrian bishops, for instance, state quite clearly :

The Holy Father does not speak of grave sin in his encyclical. Therefore, if someone should err against the teaching of the encyclical, he must not feel cut off from God's love in every case, and may then receive Holy Communion without first going to confession.⁵

The statement of the British bishops also seems to agree that the encyclical does not refer to grave sin :

There is no threat of damnation. Far from being excluded from the sacraments those in difficulties are invited to receive them more frequently.⁶

The American bishops feel that

Humanae Vitae does not discuss the question of the good faith of those who make practical decisions against what the Church considers a divine law and the will of God. The encyclical does not undertake to judge the conscience of individuals.⁷

The Italian bishops consider the teaching of Pope Paul VI as an ideal to be attained rather than a prohibition binding under serious sin. This teaching according to them, is a fearless expression of the ideal that the Church must propose to mankind. With regard to contraception the Italian bishops exhort the faithful not to be disheartened by failures because

The Church, whose task it is to declare the total and perfect goodness, is not unaware that there are laws of growth in goodness, and that at times one passes through stages still imperfect, although with the aim of loyally overcoming them in a constant effort towards the ideal.⁸

6) We also have the testimonies of individual bishops. W. Bekkers, Bishop of Hertogenbosch, in a television programme said:

If it is true that in human life there is physical and mental growth until the moment of death, we ought to have the courage to accept that there are many people who find themselves in a period of transition. They have not arrived yet at authentic living. Ethics should certainly take this into account.

And while we know that periodic continence is a solution for many people, we are also aware that it presents others with really insuperable obstacles. We

5. "Austrian Bishops on *Humanae Vitae*", *Catholic Mind* 67 (April 1969), p. 59.

6. "British Bishops on *Humanae Vitae*", *Catholic Mind* 66 (November 1968), p. 60.

7. Cf. *Baltimore Sun*, November 16, 1968, p. 12.

8. "Italian Bishops on *Humanae Vitae*", *Catholic Mind* 67 (April 1968), p. 64.

realize too that there may be certain situations in which it is impossible to be mindful of all and every Christian and human value at the same time.

The Church does not consider this from a prejudiced, aloof point of view to be wholly due to selfishness and love of ease — even if, in many cases, this is the inescapable truth. She knows that some, sincerely concerned though they are for their families and each other, sometimes follow ways which she cannot recognize as the right ones. But the Church also knows that what is possible for one particular individual is not necessarily within the reach of another. She realizes that there is room for gradual, though possibly slow and defective growth as in all the other spheres of life, such as chastity, sincerity, devotion. As long as men have not advanced far enough, she will hold to the principle that those who try sincerely and seriously, are on the right track, despite all their failures. She has faith in the sincere love and mutual responsibility of the married couple who put their trust in the love and the power of the Lord.⁹

Bishop Cashman, of Arundel and Brighton (England), observed in a pastoral letter:

However, condemnation of artificial birth control is not a condemnation of those who in temptation, or through worry and other difficulties, transgress the moral law in this regard. For those couples who are struggling to keep God's law in their married life, the help of the sacraments is always available. The sacraments are not meant to be signs of perfect holiness already achieved. They are there to aid us in our fight against all sin, and the sin of artificial birth control is not excluded. Married couples, therefore, provided they have the good will to observe God's law perfectly in their marriage, should meanwhile use the sacraments as much as possible.¹⁰

We read the following in a pastoral letter of Cardinal Heenan, Archbishop of Westminster:

Meanwhile the Church has compassion on the many for whom this ruling will bring hardship. Those who have become accustomed to using methods which are unlawful may not be able all at once to resist temptation. They must not despair. Above all they must not abstain from the sacraments. However often they fail, they must ask God's grace to find the strength to obey his law.¹¹

All these statements seem to infer that if a person did his best, his contraceptive action would not be sinful. The advice of these bishops to persevere in approaching confession and communion was intended to be interpreted in this way. They were re-echoing the exhortation of Pope Paul to confessors not to deny absolution even when the penitent could not promise that he would not resort to contraception again:

And if sin should still keep its hold over them, let them not be discouraged, but rather have recourse with humble perseverance to the mercy of God, which is poured forth in the sacrament of penance.¹²

9. Cf. *Herder Correspondence*, October 1963, p. 29.

10. Cf. Leo PYLE, *Pope and Pill*, London, 1968, pp. 172-173.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

12. *Humanae Vitae*, n. 25.

7) Many theologians admit all this and go even further. Kevin Kelly, for instance, feels that HV is primarily concerned with objective morality.¹³ The encyclical is not concerned primarily with subjective morality, i.e., whether this action is a personal sin separating this man or woman from the love of God, but with objective morality, i.e., whether this way of acting fully respects human values. In other words, the phrase *intrinsically evil* does not mean *subjectively sinful*. It simply means that this action considered in itself is opposed to the true good of man.

It is interesting to compare the text of *Casti Connubii* with that of *Humanae Vitae* on this point. *Casti Connubii* makes an immediate transition from objectively evil to *subjectively sinful*, whereas *Humanae Vitae* seems to avoid this deliberately. In *Casti Connubii* we read:

... the Catholic Church, ... standing erect amidst this moral devastation, raises her voice in sign of her divine mission to keep the chastity of the marriage contract unsullied by this ugly stain, and through Our mouth proclaims anew: that any use of matrimony whatsoever in the exercise of which the act is deprived, by human interference, of its natural power to procreate life, is an offence against the law of God and of nature, and that those who commit it are guilty of a grave sin.¹⁴

But in *Humanae Vitae* we have:

Regulating birth is wrong when it involves directly some interruption of the procreative process once begun ... All actions are forbidden which stop the natural effect of any marriage act, whether done before the act or during it, or after it is over ... So it is wrong to argue that contraceptive actions are allowed within a married life that is considered fruitful as a whole.¹⁵

It is significant to note further that *Humanae Vitae* does not mention the word *sin* until Part III which is concerned with Pastoral Directives; and even there the first attribution of culpability has nothing to do with husbands and wives but with "principalities and powers of this world", as St Paul would say.

God's providence is not to blame if governments are lacking in real wisdom, or social justice is an empty phrase, if some men keep on growing ever richer by hoarding the goods that all should share, while others are the victims of their own apathy. God's providence is not to blame if countries fail to take off as they should towards the better life they could enjoy.¹⁶

Sin is only mentioned with reference to the married couple in number 25, and there specifically in the context of God's mercy, compassion and forgiveness. The only other times when *sin* is mentioned

13. Kevin KELLY, "A Positive Approach to *Humanae Vitae*", *The Clergy Review* 57 (1972), pp. 114-115.

14. n. 56.

15. n. 14.

16. *Humanae Vitae*, n. 23.

(more precisely *sinners*) are in numbers 19 and 29, and in both cases the reference is to the forgiveness and compassion of Christ himself:

The Church cannot adopt towards mankind a different attitude from that of the divine Redeemer. She knows their weakness; she has compassion on the multitudes; she welcomes sinners.¹⁷

For when he (the Lord) came, not to judge but to save the world, was he not bitterly severe towards sin, but patient and abounding in mercy towards sinners? Husbands and wives, therefore, must find stamped in the heart and voice of their priests the likeness of the voice and love of our Redeemer.¹⁸

II. Pastoral Guidelines for Confessors

A confessor ought to acquaint himself with the norms of pastoral theology, besides acquainting himself with the teaching of HV on contraception and respecting it. He should be imbued with the pastoral approach of the Pope over and above trying to assimilate his teaching.

A confessor should avoid two extreme reactions to HV. In the first place, he should avoid the extreme of condemning the encyclical as wrong. On the other hand, he should avoid the extreme of claiming HV to be absolutely binding in all its details so that there can be no legitimate divergence from it. He should take HV seriously because it contains the teaching of a pope which has considerable tradition behind it. He should therefore zealously uphold the body of sexual morality that is common to all Catholics, such as that marriage is a covenant of love rather than the legitimization of sexual instincts; that it has to be open to procreation, etc. An attitude of responsibility should be inculcated into the faithful. It would imply the development in them of a consciousness that is committed to the enhancement of all the true values of marriage, which include growth in mutual love of husband and wife, concern for the optimum development of the partners and their children, readiness to face the multi-faceted challenges of marriage in a constructive way, etc.

We may classify penitents under four categories in reference to their reactions to HV; and the approach of the confessor should be different, to each of these categories. There are those who accept the teaching of HV in its entirety and follow it; there are those who accept the papal teaching, but are unable to follow it in certain situations and are therefore in a state of confusion and perplexity; there are those who are in doubt as to the correctness of the teaching of the encyclical and are therefore in need of guidance; and finally there are those who, in good conscience, maintain a position that is contrary to the teaching of the encyclical.

17. n. 19.

18. n. 29.

a. Help for the Assenting Penitent

The confessor will meet several persons who reject contraception as intrinsically evil. Since they have the authentic papal teaching to support them, he should not seek to "enlighten" them with his personal opinion if it differs from the papal teaching. He should desist from cleverly manipulating them into accepting his personal views on the matter. His attitude towards HV should be free of short-sighted emotionalism which is apt to bring down the respect due to it among the people of God.

b. Help for the Perplexed Penitent

Another category of penitents that a confessor will meet, consists of those who sincerely accept the teaching of the encyclical but are having practical problems in observing it. No attempt should be made by the confessor to undermine this acceptance. They must be encouraged to do their utmost to conform their conjugal life to what they think is God's design for such a life.

Here we have an instance of perplexed conscience, and the confessor should apply the principles enunciated by traditional moral theology regarding the perplexed conscience which is faced with two choices and sees sin in either of them. In this case, as the manuals teach and as clearly expressed by the Canadian bishops, the penitent "may be safely assured that whoever honestly chooses that course which seems right to him does so in good conscience".¹⁹ The confessor can assure the perplexed penitent that he is not culpable in his decision to adopt contraception, basing himself, among other things, on the following grounds.

1) There is the support of the various national hierarchies. The French bishops wrote:

Contraception can never be a good thing. It is always a disorder, but the disorder is not always culpable. It can happen, in effect, that couples find themselves faced with a veritable conflict of duties.²⁰

The Swiss bishops have the following to say:

It may happen that in a particular instance they (the couples) are unable to comply with all the demands of the encyclical concerning the regulation of births. If they do not act out of egoism or a care for material values, but rather endeavour in all sincerity to do God's will more perfectly every day, it is permissible for them to conclude that they are not culpable in the eyes of God.²¹

19. Cf. *Doctrine and Life* 19 (1969), p. 102.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

The bishops of Japan stated:

We are well aware that the observance of this teaching will bring difficulties to many married people. In such cases if, while exerting all good will to be obedient to the encyclical, they are unable to follow it in some point on account of unavoidable actual and objective circumstances, the faithful should not think that they have been separated from the love of God.²²

In the statement of the bishops of Indonesia we read:

There are parents who are troubled because on the one hand they feel the obligation to regulate births, while on the other they are not able to fulfil this obligation by temporary or absolute sexual abstinence. In these circumstances, they decide responsibly and do not need to feel that they have sinned if they employ other methods . . .²³

2) Granted that we are living in a sinful world it is quite understandable that many couples will not be able to realize all the values proposed by HV. Natural family planning needs animators and educators to teach its methods, and due to the paucity of such educators many couples will never hear about these methods, much less learn to use them. These are left with just two alternatives, either to abstain completely from sexual intimacy or to employ artificial methods. Complete abstinence from sexual intimacy seriously imperils two basic values of marriage, namely, fidelity between the partners and devoted care for the development of their children. Vatican II is quite specific on this point:

Where the intimacy of married life is broken off, it is not rare for its faithfulness to be imperilled and its quality of fruitfulness ruined. For then the upbringing of the children and the courage to accept new ones are both endangered.²⁴

The other alternative of adopting contraception goes counter to the values proposed by HV. Thus they are in a conflict situation of two evils where they have to choose one. Evidently most couples will choose contraception as the lesser of two evils.

In such and similar cases we should not think that fidelity to the papal teaching will necessarily mean avoidance of contraception, whatever the cost. In the complexity of many related but separable values of married life in our sin-infected world, there do arise situations where a couple might be forced to sacrifice a lesser value in order to safeguard a greater one. This is not a denial of the lesser value nor of its violation in the process of promoting the greater value. When a person who fully accepts the teaching of the encyclical is forced by circumstances to opt for contraception, he may be said to make a

22. Ibid.

23. Cf. *Catholic Mind* 72 (January 1974), pp. 10-11.

24. *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, n. 51.

decision of conscience that is "subjectively defensible" in the terminology of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy.

3) After all, the moral obligation is to do what is possible. Christian morality confronts us with ideals to be seriously aimed at. It expects from us an attitude of generous striving. The values promoted by HV represent the ideal of married love, towards which every human being must strive. In the process of striving towards this ideal of marriage in this sinful world, we have to allow for its non-achievement when it is impossible to achieve all its values. The moral goodness or badness of an action will then depend on the best that can be done in that situation keeping in view the ideal, and not on the defective aspects of the action. A conscience-decision to perform the least bad action and therefore the best possible action in a concrete situation is never culpable. In a real conflict situation, the decision to resort to contraception is not a decision to do evil, but a decision to do the least bad and the best possible in the circumstances. This is not a culpable violation of the values inculcated by HV.

c. Help for the Doubting Penitent

Often the confessor will be called upon to help a penitent who is not sure about the morality of contraception. The penitent wishes to do the right thing and seeks guidance on the matter.

1) The confessor should be cautious of those penitents who want permission from him for contraception. They are trying to use him in order to evade personal responsibility in deciding for themselves.

The confessor should refrain from making conscience-decisions for his penitents. No confessor can permit others to contracept. He ought to help them to form their own conscience and come to their own responsible decisions. He can explore with them if they are making a conscientious decision when they decide to practise contraception.

2) The confessor has the duty to tell the penitent that the current authentic teaching of the papal magisterium is that contraception is evil. In his official capacity as confessor, he represents the official magisterium even when it teaches non-infallibly.

In his endeavour to inculcate the values of HV, the confessor should explain to the penitent the various gradations of authority in papal teachings. Most Catholics, in their practical life, do not distinguish between the infallible and the non-infallible magisterium of the pope. In practice, they regard every teaching of the pope as infallible and irreformable. We will not be doing a service to the

magisterium if we allow the aura of infallibility to spill over into areas of non-infallibility.

3) If a penitent were to seek his personal opinion, the confessor has the right to communicate it even if it is in disagreement with the official teaching provided he takes care not to diminish the general respect due to the hierarchical magisterium. He must remind the penitent that his is a personal opinion and that he has no intention of opposing the official teaching. He must also inform the penitent that his personal opinion does not enjoy the same status as the official position and that the official position enjoys the presumption of truth.

After having explained the authentic teaching of the encyclical, it is permissible for the confessor to draw the attention of the penitent, if necessary, to the fact that there are legitimate dissenting views in the Church. This is no more than presenting to him what he already knows from the media of communication.

1. Help for the Dissenting Penitent

It is unfortunate that there should exist a situation in which a considerable part of the faithful cannot, in spite of their loyalty to the Church, agree with the papal teaching on contraception. Nobody can deny the fact that many members of the Church consider the teaching of HV on contraception to be in need of revision. Their conscience is settled on this matter and it suffers from no confusion. They have seen numerous responsible co-believers who consider it legitimate not to follow the injunctions of the encyclical on contraception when there is a real need; they have seen numerous serious-minded and obedient theologians who have dissented from the encyclical and many national episcopal conferences that have defended the rights of conscience in this regard.

1) The confessor should respect the conviction of a penitent who holds a position that deviates from the teaching of the encyclical, provided he has maturely examined his conscience in an attitude of self-criticism, given respectful thought to the papal teaching and evaluated his situation in humble prayer before God. Such a person would be free of sin and would not be disloyal to the authority of the Church. We should not presuppose that fidelity to the papal teaching always implies the affirmation that couples who practise contraception in conflict situations are guilty of sin. When a person succeeds in forming a sincere and true conscience in this regard, he is in friendship with God and need not, in principle, subject the practice of contraception to confession.

Several national hierarchies agree with this pastoral approach. The Scandinavian bishops stated:

The spiritual guide should bear in mind the possibility of growth and increasing maturity in the personal and intimate sphere of married life. He must also consider the eventuality of one of the partners being convinced that he is following the dictates of his conscience, while diverging from the norm of the encyclical, and that in this case there exists no sin, requiring confession or exclusion from Holy Communion.²⁵

According to the Australian bishops:

It is not impossible, however, that an individual may fully accept the teaching authority of the Pope in general, may be aware of his teaching in this matter, and yet reach a position after honest study and prayer that is at variance with the papal teaching. Such a person could be without blame; he would certainly not have cut himself off from the Church; and in acting in accordance with his conscience he could be without subjective guilt.²⁶

In the statement of the German hierarchy we read:

Any one who considers that he must think in this way (diverging from the papal teaching) must conscientiously examine whether, free from subjective arrogance and rash presumption, he can answer for his standpoint before the judgment seat of God. In maintaining this standpoint, he will have to have regard for the laws of dialogue within the Church and try to avoid all scandal. Only if he acts in this way will he not be at variance with authority and the duty of obedience as correctly understood.²⁷

In another statement the German bishops said:

We refer to the fact that in the exercise of its task the ecclesiastical magisterium can fall into error, and indeed has been known to do so. The Church has always been aware of this possibility, has catered for it in its theology, and has developed rules of procedure for such a situation. This possibility or error does not arise with those decisions whose promulgation demands the absolute assent of faith — namely those promulgated by the solemn definition of a Pope or General Council or through the ordinary magisterium We are concerned with error and the possibility of error in the non-defined teachings of the Church, which in their turn demand very different degrees of assent. . . . Whoever believes that he must follow his own opinion, having a better appreciation than the Church, must ask himself soberly before God and his conscience, whether he has the necessary breadth and depth of theological expertise to deviate from the explicit teaching of ecclesiastical authority. Such a situation is conceivable, but subjective conceit and idle arrogance will have to be answered for before God's judgment.²⁸

The Australian bishops express a similar view:

Since the encyclical does not contain an infallible dogma, it is conceivable that someone feels unable to accept the judgment of the teaching authority of the Church. The answer to this is: if someone has experience in the field

25. Cf. *Doctrine and Life* 19 (1969), p. 104.

26. Cf. *Doctrine and Life* 25 (1975), pp. 68-72.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Cf. *Catholic Mind* 69 (December 1971), pp. 20-21.

and has reached a divergent conviction after serious consideration, free of emotional haste, he may for the time being follow it. He does not err, if he is willing to continue his examination and otherwise affords respect and fidelity to the Church.²⁹

The Canadian bishops stated:

It is a fact that a certain number of Catholics, although admittedly subject to the teaching of the encyclical, find it either extremely difficult or even impossible to make their own all the elements of this doctrine Since they are not denying any point of divine and Catholic faith nor rejecting the teaching authority of the Church, these Catholics should not be considered, or consider themselves, shut off from the body of the faithful. But they should remember that their good faith will be dependent on a sincere self-examination to determine the true motives and grounds for such suspension of assent and on a continued effort to understand and deepen their knowledge of the teaching of the Church The confessor or counsellor must show sympathetic understanding and reverence for the sincere good faith of those who fail in their effort to accept some point of the encyclical.³⁰

In a pastoral letter of the U.S. bishops we read:

There exists in the Church a lawful freedom of inquiry and of thought, and also general norms of licit dissent. This is particularly true in the area of legitimate theological speculation and research. When conclusions reached by such professional theological work prompt a scholar to dissent from non-infallible received teaching the norms of licit dissent come into play. They require of him careful respect for the consciences of those who lack his special competence or opportunity for judicious investigation. These norms also require setting forth his dissent with propriety and with regard for the gravity of the matter, and the deference due to the authority which has pronounced on it.³¹

There is nothing theologically strange in this state of affairs regarding contraception, although we are not used to such situations. In a transitional period of moral evolution it is legitimately possible for a situation to arise in which there is an authentic teaching of the hierarchical magisterium on a certain point which is at the same time capable of revision. In the history of the Church there have been several instances of this kind, although they were not accompanied by such a fanfare as today.

2) The dissenting penitent should be willing to grant the presumption of truth to the papal teaching. It is true that the Holy Spirit is present in all the faithful; yet the presence of the Spirit is greater in the visible head of the Church when he proposes a teaching for the entire Church. Hence the teaching of HV on contraception should be accepted as presumptively true and the opinion of the dissenting penitent as presumptively false.

29. Cf. *Documentary Service*, October 4, 1968.

30. *Documentary Service*, September 30, 1968.

31. Cf. *Theology Digest* 16 (1968), p. 309.

The confessor should exhort the penitent to have great love for the Church and respect for its authority. The penitent should be able to differentiate between infallible teaching which is irreformable and non-infallible teaching which is reformable. He should also be aware that the Church authority cannot remain silent on a matter until it is able to speak on it infallibly. He should also be open to a re-evaluation of his opinion.

3) Even if the confessor were to feel that no penitent has the objective right to disagree with the papal teaching, he should not refuse absolution to a dissenting penitent. This penitent could be treated as one in good faith, namely, as one who thinks he is doing the correct thing when, in fact, he is not doing so. The confessor could presuppose that his attempt to make the penitent accept the papal teaching would do more harm than good and hence he could leave him in his good faith.

Conclusion

We do not fulfil our pastoral responsibility to the faithful in the matter of family planning by merely repeating what the pope has said in HV. The pastors should help the people to appreciate all the values contained in the encyclical and to safeguard them as far as possible in their particular decisions. The avoidance of contraception at all cost cannot be made the touchstone of pastoral work for the married people. Stressing one value to the detriment of others is neither moral nor pastoral. Every effort should be made to understand the papal teaching against the backdrop of the wide spectrum of authoritative opinions from various quarters in the Church.

Every pastor, whatever his theological orientation, should be inspired by the compassionate pastoral approach of Pope Paul in his encyclical. Otherwise he would be giving a stone to the one who needed bread.

Book Reviews

The Holy Spirit

Je crois en l'Esprit Saint. Tome I: L'Esprit Saint dans l' "Economie"; Révélation et Expérience de l'Esprit. Tome II: "Il est Seigneur et Il donne la vie". By Yves M. J. CONGAR. *Parls, Cerf, 1979. Pp. 238, 296 (No price given).*

There has taken place in recent decades a re-entry of the Holy Spirit into the Western tradition of Catholic theology. The movement had begun before the Second Vatican Council but was promoted by it. It has been further intensified later, as is proved by the abundance of literature on pneumatology published in recent years. Related to the new awareness of the Spirit are many renewal movements, such as the charismatic renewal, prayer movements, the new search for community and ministries, etc. There was need for a serious study which, going to the roots of the present renewal in the Spirit, would show the role of the Spirit in the life of the Church and of the Christian. Yves Congar, a prominent ecclesialogist who contributed much to the making of Vatican II, was well placed to write such a study. Two volumes have been published, and a third one is announced. The first volume is devoted to "The Holy Spirit in the 'Economy': Revelation and Experience of the Spirit"; the theme of the second is "He is Lord and Giver of Life". These subtitles, as well as the main title of the work, "I believe in the Holy Spirit", borrowed from the Symbol of Nicea-Constantinople, indicate how deeply the entire work is rooted in Scripture and tradition. Congar's method is genetic and progressive. Some will regret it, to whom an inductive method starting from present-day situation appears more effective, but, presumably, Congar believes that an adequate treatment of the subject requires that the theme be followed in its progressive development through revelation and the Church's growing awareness. In this sense the work remains classical and traditional in its method and approach.

1. The first volume on revelation and experience of the Spirit in the economy of salvation begins with Scripture: the O.T. is reviewed rapidly, perhaps too rapidly; the N.T. follows with the Synoptics, St Paul, the Acts, and the Johannine writings. Next the experience of the Spirit is pursued "through the history of Christianity". Congar does not try here to be exhaustive; he rather picks periods and currents which have made an impact either on the dogmatic development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, or on the life of the Church. His vast knowledge of the Christian tradition is here put to good use. I have appreciated especially his analysis of the development of doctrine, dogmatic and theological. He also excels in drawing the line between movements of genuine "spiritual" renewal and "enthusiastic" currents not devoid of deformations. He shows how oblivion of the Spirit has sometimes led to doctrinal imbalance. It is well known that even Vatican II has been found wanting in pneumatology by Orthodox theologians. Congar examines the Council documents and shows that the role of the Spirit in them must not be evaluated only in terms of explicit references; the entire approach of the Council, for instance to the mystery of the Church, is deeply imbued with pneumatology.

2. The second volume deals more systematically with the role of the Spirit in the life of the Church (first part) and of the Christian (second part). Congar rightly insists on not separating but uniting the action of Christ and the economy of the Spirit. "Christomonism" and "Pneumatomonism" are both one-sided views. The full truth is that there is one economy of Jesus Christ through the Spirit, or of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Thus the Church is born from the two "missions" of the Son and of the Spirit: the Spirit is "co-founder" of the Church with Jesus Christ. He is the principle of the Church's unity, catholicity, apostolicity and holiness. He is also in us the "link" of our relationship with God in his Son; his indwelling makes us cry "Abba" to God, the Father of Jesus Christ. A third part of this second volume is devoted to the present renewal

in the Spirit. Congar's approach to the charismatic renewal is positive: he shows its potential for Church renewal and unity. At the same time he formulates and discusses questions often raised, with regard to terminology, charisms and 'baptism in the Spirit'.

This is not a *summa* and much remains to be treated in the third volume, including the difficult question of the *epiclesis* which Congar considers very important. But the two present volumes, to which a short account cannot do justice, already constitute a rich fare.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

The Holy Spirit. By C. F. D. MOULE. Oxford, Mowbray, 1978. Pp. 120. £ 4.50.

Having found Moule's recent book on N.T. Christology (*The Origin of Christology*, Cambridge University Press, 1977) very satisfying, I must confess to some disappointment with this book on *The Holy Spirit*. Admittedly, the Mowbrays Library of Theology in which it is published required the author to extend beyond Scripture which is his specialised field. The result, however, is that too much ground is covered in too little space, and all suffers in the process, the scriptural treatment included. The N.T. is succinctly treated, though there is a suggestive parallel between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man. The "personhood" of the Spirit — to use a modern category — in the Gospel of John is not sufficiently brought out. Even more sketchy is the consideration of subsequent doctrinal developments. Moule considers the binitarian stance, which he finds prominent in the N.T., more significant than the trinitarian understanding developed later. Not surprisingly since, as just mentioned, the N.T. data themselves have not been fully made use of. Next, the author draws a parallel between "Inspiration and Incarnation", that is between the economy of the Spirit in the Scriptures and the unique manifestation of God in Jesus Christ. Two more short chapters deal with "Spirit, Church and Liturgy" and "The Charismatic Question".

The book will provide for the enquirer a good introduction to the subject; but it will disappoint the theologian.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

The Holy Spirit. Activating God's Power in Your Life. By Billy GRAHAM.

London, Collins, 1979. Pp. 224. £ 3.95. (Fount Paperback, 1980, 95p.)

One reviewer described the book by Billy Graham as "far and away his best book". Billy Graham himself said: "My sole concern has been to see what the Bible has to say about the Holy Spirit. The Bible, which I believe the Holy Spirit inspired, is our only trustworthy source." In his preface he notes that the book really began "as part of my personal spiritual pilgrimage". Sensing his own need for a fuller realization of the working of the Holy Spirit in the world today, he began a systematic study of what the Bible teaches about his person and work. What he shares with his readers is the discovery that followed. The Spirit is the one who "has come alongside to help". B. Graham's account will, no doubt, lead readers to a greater awareness of the presence of the Spirit and to a direct confrontation with the one who can indwell and empower them. His very evangelical approach stands out throughout, everywhere leading to a decision. Exegetically, one could quarrel with a certain fundamentalism, but it seems more appropriate to admit a diversity of charisms and methods. The large crowds which have been influenced by B. Graham's crusades and writings will also be moved by this book.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Charismatic Renewal

Fire in the Fireplace. Contemporary Charismatic Renewal. By Charles E. HUMMEL. Oxford, Mowbray, 1979. Pp. 255. £ 4.95.

In the present abundance of literature on the Charismatic Renewal, one may wonder whether more books still are needed. But there seems no doubt that this one makes a solid and positive contribution. The title indicates the thrust of the book. Fire is good; it is even essential. But it can be dangerous if handled improperly. The Charismatic Renewal is rekindling the fire; but let us make sure that the fire is in the fire-place, not in the middle of the floor. Then only will it heat the house, not burn it down. In other words, the Charismatic Renewal is for the Church, and therefore must be right inside, not on the margin. This does not mean that the Church herself need not change; for — the analogy goes on — "remodelling the fire-place" will be necessary for the fire to

catch up. We are engaged in this process of rekindling and remodelling, and both must be combined.

One of the merits of the book is its solid base in Scripture, especially Luke/Acts and the letters of St Paul. Another is its awareness of contemporary issues. But, underlying all, is a deep concern for unity in the great diversity of the manifestations of the Spirit. The book can be highly recommended.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Did You Receive the Spirit? By Simon TUGWELL, O.P. *London, Darton, Longman and Todd*, 1979. Pp. 144. £ 1.95.

This is a revised edition of a book first published in 1972. In his new introduction the author admits that much has happened to the charismatic movement since the book was first written — not least of which is the spectacular growth of the renewal in Roman Catholicism. In these circumstances, to re-write the book would have meant to produce a new one. He thought it best to make only few alterations, thus essentially preserving the original message unaltered. We may refer readers to the review of the original edition, published in our columns (Cf. *THE CLERGY MONTHLY* 1972, pp. 403-404).

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Miscellaneous

Suffering Man, Loving God. By James MARTIN. *London, Collins* (Fount Paperback), Revised Edition, 1979. Pp. 109. 75p.

The fact of human suffering constitutes a real problem, especially in the context of the Christian faith in an almighty and loving God. The present author tackles very well two questions, the 'why' of suffering and the 'how' of coping with it.

First, he tries to dispel some of the common misconceptions regarding the cause of suffering. It is not 'sent' by God in the sense that it is wished by him. God only *permits* suffering which arises from human weakness and misuse of freedom. The bulk of human suffering can in fact be traced to man's sin and folly; the rest belongs to the realm of the world as it is and the laws that govern it. Secondly, it is too simplistic to explain all suffering as a punishment for one's sins. Further, even though God draws good out of evil, it is not quite accurate to say that he directly decrees it as a

discipline or test of faith. While there are traces of retributive and punitive justice, and disciplinary ideas on suffering in the Old Testament, in the New Testament suffering clearly appears as an evil which Jesus seeks to remove or helps people to cope with.

Confronted with suffering, the Christian will not adopt the attitude of mere passive resignation, nor the stoic stance of defiance, nor give in to resentment and rebellion, anger and bitterness. He will try to overcome it as best as possible and for the rest see its salvific and transforming potential.

At the end, the author has provided some helpful prayers for various tragic situations. The small book deserves to be widely diffused.

G. LOBO, S.J.

Population and Manipulation. By Paul J. KOOLA. *Bangalore, Asian Trading Corporation*, 1979. Pp. xx-257. Rs 18.

The book is a study on the contemporary problem of population which has considerable importance for third world countries like India. The author's special interest is in the moral implications of population explosion and control. He briefly surveys the size, the composition and distribution of population in the world. In this connection, he critically examines different population theories, such as those of Malthus, Sadler, Doubleday, Spencer and others.

The author then presents world population trends in an analytic manner, basing his study on sources available from the U.N. Population control is linked with development. Koola's main contribution to the debate lies in his study of the moral basis and implications of population control. Starting from the idea of the human person (implying moral natural law and human dignity), he critically examines the nature of man's intervention, especially with reference to birth-control manipulation. One of the significant chapters in the book is that on population education, in which the author stresses the cooperative involvement of family, Church and State. As a responsive and responsible venture, population education must be conducted within "the limits posed by human freedom and dignity". Though one regrets a lack of sensitivity to the problems of the third world, the book contributes to clarify the moral implications of our choices regarding population control and development.

S. AROKIASAMY, S.J.

Seven Years of Change. A Study of Some Scheduled Castes in Bangalore District. By Mumtaz Ali Khan. Madras, The Christian Literature Society, 1979. Pp. xii-232. Rs 21.

The book is a sociological study of Scheduled Castes in Bangalore district. It is based on the assessment done in 1970, compared with the conditions obtaining in 1977. The scope of the study includes the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled castes with regard to education, land-holdings, income, indebtedness, habitation, political participation, leadership and intercaste relations. It seeks to identify factors which either promote or hinder change. The author's analysis brings to light many such factors. His analysis of land-holding, education, untouchability,

leadership, religion is especially significant for he highlights here the human and cultural factors responsible for the depressed state of Scheduled castes with reference to the interaction between high and low castes. The high castes are largely prejudiced against the scheduled castes and favour the status quo. Though some changes have taken place between 1970 and 1977, the structural factors that keep the scheduled castes in a state of oppression still continue. The study, though limited to a district in Karnataka, points to a similar situation of scheduled castes in other parts of the country. The book should prove valuable to anyone interested in the struggle for justice and in the betterment of scheduled castes in India.

S. AROKIASAMY, S.J.

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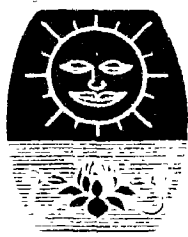
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JOURNAL OF THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION



पञ्चमहाभक्ति



**The Pastor and Mixed Marriages
Forming Religious to Serve the
Poor**

**Effective Preaching
Liturgical Inculturation**

AUGUST 1980

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In This Issue

The Synod of Bishops in Rome on "The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World" will open at the end of September. In a sense the theme chosen for this General Assembly links up with the previous ones, on Evangelization (1974) and Catechesis (1977). In their Communication to the Synod, the Bishops of India wrote: "The well-being of the Church in any country depends very largely upon the quality of the Christian family, even as the state of the family in general is an index of the state of society in any given time" (n. 64). Stressing the Vatican II theme of Christian families as "domestic churches", they went on to say: "These are in very truth the signs and instruments of Christ's enlightening Wisdom, of the Redeemer's loving care and concern, and of the Saviour's burning thirst that all men be saved and brought to the knowledge of the truth" (ibid.).

Yet the family in general, and the Christian family in particular, is in our modern world under much pressure. The forthcoming Synod is an occasion to survey some of its problems and to indicate avenues for their solution. After the article on "Pastoral Aspects of Family Planning", published last month, we have another on the "Pastoral Dimensions of Mixed Marriages". Fr G. LOBO studies both inter-church and inter-religious marriages, especially in the context of India. From a theological reflection on the ecclesial situation obtaining in each case, he passes on to the pastoral attitude which the situation demands.

Witnessing to justice and the service of the poor are, at least in principle, accepted as a priority task of the mission in India as in the entire Third World. But is the clergy being prepared for this task? And are the religious? In a long article, the first instalment of which appears in this issue, Fr J. VELAMKUNNEL briefly outlines the Indian social reality. He then proceeds to show that the training traditionally given in houses of formation alienates young religious men and women from the masses by inserting them into an elite culture. Wrong mechanisms are thus created which make participation with the poor well nigh impossible. Serious reforms are required in the formation programmes, for which the second part of the article will offer suggestions.

Why is our preaching often ineffective? Preaching is made up of four elements: the preacher, the message, the medium, and the hearer. Concrete and to the point, Fr V. M. DASAN applies the art of communication to the proclamation of the word.

The liturgical inculturation promoted by Vatican II has borne some fruits in India. One such realization in the field of architecture is the Church built by the tribals of Zankhvav, Gujarat. Fr I. GALDOS who inspired the project describes the adivasi Church.

Pastoral Dimensions of Mixed Marriages

George V. LOBO, S.J.

AS the Synod of Bishops is about to tackle the theme of the Family, the question of mixed marriages particularly comes to mind since it is a widespread and increasing phenomenon in every country today. The post-conciliar stand of the Catholic Church regarding this matter has been crystallised in the *Motu Proprio Matrimonia Mixta*.¹ In this document, mixed marriages are still discouraged, but the discipline regarding them has been considerably relaxed and there is a strong exhortation to a pastoral approach to the whole matter. These pages are intended to highlight some of the pastoral issues involved in mixed marriages.

Inter-Church Marriages

*Ecclesiological Significance of Inter-Church Marriages*²

The Christian family is a 'domestic church', the basic cell of the universal Church.³ When both the partners belong to the same confession, it is easy to see how the universal Church of Christ is realised in the basic marriage community. But when they belong to different Churches, the division in the Body of Christ is experienced within the family relationship. This can be viewed in a negative light and hence mixed marriages can be considered an evil, at times to be reluctantly tolerated. But when the partners are convinced and practising Christians the situation has a strong positive ecumenical potential even if a lot of tension and anguish is implied.

The Catholic Church admits the sacramentality of any valid marriage between two baptised persons. Hence the mystery of the 'domestic church' is realised in an inter-church family. There is of course an anomaly when on the one hand, the partners constitute

1. See *The Clergy Monthly* 34 (1970), 240-247.

2. Cf. Alasdair HERON, "The Ecclesiological Problems of Inter-church Marriage", in *Beyond Tolerance: The Challenge of Mixed Marriage*, edited by Michael HURLEY, London, Chapman, 1975, pp. 73-103; Geoffrey WAINRIGHT, "The Ecclesiological Significance of Inter-church Marriage", *ibid.*, pp. 104-119.

3. Cf. Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, n. 11.

one 'domestic church', while on the other hand they belong to two different Churches. But this anomaly is after all a manifestation of the Church of Christ being split up into different Churches. The first anomaly will not be resolved unless the wound of division in the Body of Christ is healed. Hence the problems arising from mixed marriages should be an incentive to strive for the Christian unity which the Lord desires. At the same time, a well integrated inter-church family is already in the vanguard of Christian unity. It is a sign of what is to come. Hence the Churches, especially the pastors, must give every support to the mutual relationship and spiritual life of such spouses.

Difficulties in Inter-Church Marriages

These are mainly regarding three areas: the initial celebration; joint worship; baptism and upbringing of children.

There could be three approaches to these problems: a) sinking into indifference; b) one party so insisting on his/her point of view that an intolerable tension arises or the other makes compromises which are not in the interests of the partners or of either Church; c) accepting the challenge of building up the partnership in creative tension so that the couple find personal fulfilment and at the same time make a positive contribution to overall Church unity.

There is no doubt that only the third approach is proper. It is all the more necessary in mission lands where, Christians being in a minority, there is a more urgent need to give united witness to Christ.

Whenever Christians of different denominations meet one another with an open mind, they invariably find that there is much more that unites them than there is that divides them. Catholic and Protestant groups in several countries have begun to realise that agreement is possible even on such issues as the Eucharist, Ministry and the Petrine Office in the Church. If Christians in India were to take their evangelical task more seriously, they would, perhaps, find mutual agreement on vital issues even easier.

Belonging to the Church of Christ, if it is to be real, implies membership in one of the concrete existing ecclesial communions. Each partner of an inter-church marriage basically belongs to one Church. But because of the close unity arising from the sacramental community of marriage, each spouse has a vital link with the other Church. Whether this is called 'associate membership'⁴ or not, there should be some sense of solidarity which is not without great ecumenical significance.

4. Cf. Alasdair HERON, art. cit., p. 97.

Celebration of Marriage

As is well known, according to Catholic doctrine, it is the very mutual consent of the partners that is the essential sacramental sign, and it is the partners themselves who are the ministers of grace to each other. As the Catholic Church recognises the sacramentality of inter-church marriages, a satisfactory arrangement regarding their celebration should not pose any insurmountable difficulty. Already, the Holy See acknowledges the right of the local bishop to grant dispensation from the requirement of an authorised priest⁵ and, further, a marriage of a Catholic with an Orthodox with the blessing of an Orthodox minister, even without any dispensation, is considered valid, though not always licit.⁶ There is no reason why the latter provision should not be extended to marriages of Catholics with other Christians.

The present regulations permit a minister of the other Church to take an active part in the marriage service conducted by a minister of one of the Churches. This provision could be much more used in practice, so that an understanding between the two pastors develops right from the start. The point of eucharistic hospitality during the marriage ceremony will be discussed under the next heading.

Common Worship

There is no doubt that common prayer based on the Word of God should be fostered in an inter-church family. Going together at times to each other's churches for Sunday worship would also be helpful. The German bishops have explicitly declared that when a Catholic partner finds it necessary to attend service in the other partner's church and, therefore, finds it difficult to attend Sunday Mass, he is excused from the obligation of doing so.⁷

However, the matter of receiving Holy Communion in each other's churches is more complex. The Instruction of the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity seems to exclude this case from the permissible occasions for admitting non-Catholic Christians to the Eucharist.⁸ Still, the bishop of Strasbourg has declared that the exclusion need not be absolute. Eucharistic hospitality would be permissible when

5. Cf. *Motu Proprio, Matrimonia Mixta*, n. 9.

6. Cf. Vatican II, *Decree on Oriental Churches*, n. 18; Decree of the S.C. for Oriental Churches, *Crescens Matrimonium*, 22 February 1967.

7. See "Joint Church Recommendations for the Preparation of Inter-church Couples for Marriage", in *One in Christ* 11 (1975), p. 394.

8. See *Acta Apostolice Sedis* 64 (1972), p. 518.

9. Directives on Eucharistic Hospitality for Inter-church Marriages, 30 November 1972; text in *One in Christ*, 9 (1973), pp. 371-387. See also "Theological Reflections" on these Directives by Joseph HOFFMAN, *ibid.*, 11 (1975), pp. 266-281.

there is basic agreement of the faith of the non-Catholic partner with that of the Catholic Church. Communion would then not be a mere personal good, but an expression of Christian unity already realised in the marriage relationship and of the commitment to full restoration of Christian unity. Thereby, the essential link between the Eucharist and the Church, strongly stressed by the documents of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, would be maintained.

Such eucharistic hospitality has been permitted more or less explicitly in some places, and practised in an unauthorised way in many others. Hence it would be highly desirable that the Holy See or the national hierarchies take a clearer and more positive stand on the matter. The forthcoming Synod of bishops could also usefully address itself to this question.

It has been frequently noted that unilateral hospitality could not be a fully satisfactory solution. On the other hand, strict reciprocity encounters the difficulty of the Catholic Church not recognising the Orders in the Protestant Churches. According to the Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism: "Especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Order (the Churches of the Reformation) have not fully preserved the whole reality of the eucharistic mystery" (n. 22). But this does not mean that they have preserved nothing or that their celebration of the Lord's Supper is an empty and ineffectual ritual. There should be no hesitation in admitting that in a Protestant celebration of the Eucharist, Christ is present to his people, incorporating them into his Body and making them participate in his life, although the sacramental modality of this presence may not be clear.

So, even while admitting that some deficiency is involved in the celebration, reception of the Eucharist by a Catholic partner in the church of his non-Catholic spouse need not be considered meaningless or necessarily illegitimate. The bishop of Strasbourg, again, considers that in special cases the Catholic spouse can be permitted to receive Communion together with his spouse in the latter's church.¹⁰ The present rigid regulations in this matter are open to revision.

This is particularly so on the occasion of the wedding itself. When the couple is being united in a sacramental bond, representing and sharing in the mystery of Christ and the Church, it would only be proper for them to receive together the source of all Christian love and unity, viz., the Eucharist. Of course, this is not to be done in a routine way but with full cognisance of the significance of the gesture, and all the necessary conditions being fulfilled.

10. *One in Christ* 9 (1973), pp. 376-379.

Baptism and Upbringing of Children

When both the parents are convinced Christians, the denominational affiliation of the children is a very difficult problem. Postponement of Baptism or a neutral Baptism would be a sort of inter-church Limbo in which the child would be neither here nor there. The argument, "let the children grow up knowing both the Church traditions and eventually make their own decision as to which Church they wish to join", does not seem to take religious psychology sufficiently into account and overlooks the danger of indifferentism lurking behind the apparent neutrality.

On the other hand, choosing a Church affiliation for the child without having any real tie, except indirectly through the other parent, to that Church would not be in the interests of the family and of the child's spiritual growth.

Hence the best solution would seem to be a choice of Church affiliation by the parents so that he belongs primarily to one Church in which he is baptised but with a real link with the other. This would be manifested, on the part of the parents, by an initiation of the child in the values proper to each tradition. Thereby, the child will have spiritual and ecclesial roots and at the same time be open to all that is good in the other confession. Later he could make his contribution to fuller Church unity.

The actual choice of denominational affiliation for the children is most delicate. The Catholic Church still requires that the Catholic party promise to try to do all in his/her power to bring up all the children in his/her faith. Although this requirement is much more flexible than the earlier absolute promise to bring up all the children as Catholics, it may still look as an unilateral imposition on the part of the Catholic Church. But really it is a spelling out of the obligation which the Catholic party has of sharing his/her faith according to the ecclesiological understanding of the Catholic Church. Vatican II has declared that the one Church of Christ "subsists in the Catholic Church",¹¹ although authentic elements of the Church do exist outside its communion.

Other Churches by reason of their ecclesiology have not the same incentive to require the upbringing of the children in their confession. Hence simply asking for parity without noting the underlying doctrinal issues is not proper. Still, it may happen that particular non-Catholic spouses may be convinced that all or some of their offspring must be brought up in their faith. There would then be a

11. *Lumen Gentium*, n. 8.

conflict of interests which can only be resolved with mutual trust and dialogue. The respective pastors would do well to help parents to make a satisfactory decision rather than urge them to harden their positions, since this latter approach would only alienate the spouses and hardly conduce to the proper Christian upbringing of the children.

Some have suggested that the decision regarding the choice of affiliation of the children be made before the wedding. This seems to be unnecessary. It would mean pushing the partners to make a premature decision, without being able to take into account the demands of a growing situation. However, the partners should understand the full implications of a mixed marriage, regarding the upbringing of children, before they enter upon the union.

*Ecumenical Celebration of Infant Baptism*¹²

This is not merely a pragmatic arrangement to please both the parties. It is meaningful in the degree to which it is the means of expressing and celebrating the ecumenical spirit lived by the couple, and a way of helping their partnership forward, along the road to unity. It is also a good start for the Christian upbringing of the child.

Although the pastors and faithful of both the Churches take part, the Church which welcomes and baptizes the child will be the one to which he will primarily be linked. Its minister will be the official celebrant, and he alone will perform the central rite of baptism, following the main outline of the liturgy approved in his Church. The minister of the other Church participates especially in the liturgy of the Word, the intercessions and prayer of the faithful.

Such a celebration will need the preparation of the parents and the two parish communities, so that all understand its significance and grave misunderstanding is averted. This preparation will make it clear that there is only one Baptism which incorporates men into the one Body of Christ. Still, it must be admitted that the Body of Christ is divided into various confessions and an actual Baptism can only be in one of the existing communities. An ecumenical celebration presupposes a certain ecumenical dynamism in the couple and a certain openness in the pastors and people of the two Churches. It is not a concelebration in the strict sense since only one of the ministers actually

12. Cf. "Note on the Ecumenical Celebration of Infant Baptism", Published by the Catholic-Protestant Working Group in France. See text in *One in Christ* 11 (1975), pp. 372-376, and a Commentary on the document by René BEAUFÈRE, *ibid.*, pp. 324-329.

performs the Baptism. As in any ordinary baptismal celebration only one of the celebrants performs the main rite; any attempt to perform this jointly would betray want of confidence in each other.

Although such a Baptism could be inscribed in the registers of both the Churches to express a certain joint responsibility in the Christian education of the child, the primary affiliation of the child in one Church should be made clear in order not to leave the child in a sort of 'no man's land' nor seem to have him admitted into a 'third Church'.

It is interesting to note that the *Ecumenical Directory* issued by the Secretariat for Christian Unity in 1967 allows an Orthodox Christian to act as one of the godparents in a Catholic Baptism. As to other non-Catholic Christians, it is said that one may fulfil the role of a 'christian witness'¹³—an ill-defined function. Such roles could be performed with much greater significance when the child is from an inter-church marriage.

Preparing the Couple for Inter-Church Marriage

As there are special difficulties as well as possibilities in a mixed marriage, there is also need for a more intensive preparation that takes into account the peculiar features of such marriage. It is very important that each partner deepen the understanding of marriage of his own tradition, and also that he be made aware of the understanding in the other Church.

The difficulties arising from different beliefs, which often have a certain psychological component, must be squarely faced. Although there is no need for arriving at a final judgment regarding the upbringing of the children, the general approach to such questions must already be discussed in advance. The kind of celebration contemplated for the wedding must also be seriously reflected upon, lest the matter become divisive or the celebration be gone through as a mere formality without any significance for the couple.

The preparation for each will on the whole be directed by his/her own pastor. Still, there must be an occasion to meet the pastor of the other party. Such a contact will help in producing greater confidence and understanding. Many of the topics of modern marriage preparation, like emotional growth, tensions in marriage, child care and financial aspects, could be handled in joint sessions for Catholic and non-Catholic youth. Thereby, resources could be better utilized and ecumenical understanding fostered.

13. nn. 42 and 57.

Joint Pastoral Care

The *Motu Proprio Matrimonia Mixta* wants local Ordinaries and parish priests "to aid the married couple to foster the unity of their conjugal and family life, a unity which, in the case of Christians, is based on their baptism too. To this end it is to be desired that those pastors should establish relationships of sincere openness and enlightened confidence with ministers of other religious communities."¹⁴

Any pastoral care of inter-church families should proceed from the assumption that there is more that we share in common than there is that divides us, that each minister should try to strengthen the Christian commitment of the partners and foster the unity of the couple. There is no area where ecumenical cooperation is more necessary. When there is a real conflict of beliefs or mentality, the two parties should be helped to have a sympathetic understanding of each other's attitude and point of view. It does not help to aggravate the conflict by narrow-mindedness. There is need for concerted efforts to educate the clergy and catechists in this area.

*Inter-Religious Marriages**Special Difficulties*

There exists a bigger anomaly in a marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian than there is between Christians of different Churches. While marriage is 'an intimate partnership of love', there exists in this case a basic diversity in religious belief which touches the depths of the personality. The Catholic Church does not recognise the sacramentality of inter-religious marriage, at least in the full sense. There is likely to be found here a greater difference of opinion regarding the essential qualities of marriage, especially in inter-religious marriages with Muslims, who rather easily admit divorce and polygamy. In practice there are often cultural differences between the partners of such marriages.

Because of these serious difficulties, the chances of an inter-religious marriage succeeding are not very high as is known from experience. Conflicts regarding the practice of the faith and the upbringing of the children are also likely to be more acute unless the non-Christian partner is indifferent to religion or, at the other extreme, favourably inclined towards the Christian faith. Hence Christian youth who wish to contract marriages with non-Christians must be helped to see the very serious implications of the step they are taking.

14. Norm 14.

Positive Attitude

Still, it does not help to condemn such marriages outright, or to have an entirely negative attitude towards them. In some places, it may not be easy for the Christian to find a Christian partner who is suitable on other counts. Experience has shown that, although very many inter-religious marriages have failed or are unhappy, still quite a few have been successful.

Hence there is need for respecting the freedom to choose one's own partner, and at the same time to help the couple to make their marriage a success, in spite of so many counter-indications.

Although inter-religious marriages cannot be proposed as a normal means to bring about mutual understanding between people of various faiths, still some of them can help in inter-religious rapprochement, especially today when Christians are more open to the values of non-Christian religions.

Preparation

The choice of a non-Christian partner should be done only with the utmost care. There is need for an in-depth reflection on all the issues involved. The time for consideration before the final decision should be sufficiently long. The partners need to know each other's faith and each other's family and community, besides each other's temperament and qualities.

The Christian must deepen his faith during the time of preparation. Any attempt to build up a relationship based on religious indifferentism will only result in making it superficial and unable to withstand the stresses of life. Although there should be no attempt at unfair proselytism, the Christian has the obligation of sharing the Good News with his partner by giving sufficient account of it and by manifesting it in his daily life.

Celebration of the Wedding

The Church normally requires the Christian celebration of inter-religious marriages. The main difficulty that arises in the context is that the Christian ceremony is taken from other cultures and unsuited to the Indian conditions. Most Hindus will not be satisfied with the way the marriage is conducted by Christians. They may feel that some essential elements are missing. The family of the non-Christian party will also have serious reservations.

Much of this problem could be resolved, at least for marriages of Christians with non-Christians of a similar cultural background,

by taking more seriously the provision for evolving a new rite. After permitting the adaptation of the Roman ritual to different regions, the Introduction to the New Rite of Marriage goes on to say: "Each Episcopal Conference has the power of drawing up a *new rite* that is suited to the customs of places and peoples" (n. 17). This adaptation is for regions within the ambit of the Western culture, while for other cultures an entirely new rite may be prepared to be submitted to the Holy See for approval. The only requirement is the presence of the priest to ask and obtain the consent of the partners and give the nuptial blessing.

Several rituals would be needed to meet the cultural situation in India. In many instances, the whole existing ceremony of a particular community could be accepted with some minor modifications and some Christian touches. The preparation of such rituals is a most urgent need, also from the doctrinal point of view, since marriage is 'a secular reality that Christ has transformed into a sacred mystery'.

In the meantime — and we hope that the interval will not be indefinite — some of the traditional ceremonies could be performed as complements during the celebration itself or at some other time. This is not an ideal solution, since the whole thing may look hybrid and create a lot of misunderstanding.

The *Motu Proprio*, *Matrimonia Mixta*, forbids a double ceremony for giving the essential marriage consent.¹⁵ It should be clear to the partners that the marriage covenant is realised normally during the Catholic ceremony, or in exceptional circumstances and with the dispensation of the bishop, during some other ceremony.

At times, a Hindu partner is ready to go through the Christian ceremony which he understands as the real marriage covenant, but would like a Hindu ceremony to be gone through in order to please his relatives. There is no reason why this should be absolutely forbidden, although it may look rather awkward, and such problems would be resolved by drawing up a rite, fully rooted in the local tradition and at the same time fully acceptable from the Christian point of view.

Education of the Children

From his Christian conviction on the unique place of Christ and his Church in the economy of salvation, the Christian partner will derive all the more reason to do all in his power to bring up the children in his faith. But this should not be understood as a mere external requirement to be practised in a narrow-minded way. The best

15. Norm 13.

interests of the child should be the prime consideration. Hence attempts to bring up the children as Christians make sense only when the Christian parent is convinced about his faith and is faithful in practising it. It would be of no avail if the children are baptised because one parent is Christian and this person only manages to convey religious indifference or moral weakness to them.

The practice of the faith on the part of the Christian partner and the Christian upbringing of the children does not mean that the Christian parent and child should not be helped to see the positive values present in the non-Christian religion of the other partner. Every attempt should be made to evolve some form of common family prayer.

Pastoral Guidance

Due to the very acute difficulties in inter-religious marriages, the pastor and other Church leaders have a special obligation to help the couple in mutual growth. The Christian partner should be helped to deepen his faith in such a way that it is open to the values of the other's religious tradition, in such a way that religious difference does not become unduly divisive. The pastor himself should have a broad vision of the action of God in every religious community, although he will retain his conviction in the unique nature of Christianity.

In India, pastoral action in favour of inter-religious couples is still in its infancy. Hence there is need for more reflection on this matter in the light of experiences already made.

Conclusion

One must recognise that mixed marriages, especially with non-Christians, are beset with many difficulties. But one should not look only at the negative side of the picture. As the phenomenon is fast increasing and is not without its positive potential, everyone concerned should show greater understanding and help to make such marriages successful.

Formation of Religious and Service of the Poor

IN THE CONTEXT OF NORTH INDIA

J. VELAMKUNNEL, S.J.

Introduction

These days we see an earnest search in many religious congregations for a type of formation more suited to the times and the people of India. This desire has found its expression in various meetings on formation and in many new experiments conducted at different levels.¹ I would like to discuss in this article one aspect of formation: its apostolic character as determined by the social reality of India. The paper will have four parts. The first part is a brief exposition of certain changes in the theological understanding of the Church and her mission. These have direct bearing on formation policies and programmes. The second part gives a short survey of the Indian social reality which would be the term of reference for our investigations. In the third part we analyse some of the formation mechanisms operative in many religious houses, with special reference to the North Indian situation, bringing out two predominant tendencies. In the last part, by sharing a few insights drawn from apostolic experiences, we pinpoint some essential elements for a new orientation of our formation programmes.

I. Changes in Theological Perspectives Affecting Formation

The theological understanding of religious life, which is conditioned by the ecclesiology of the time, influences the formation policies and strategies. The pre-Vatican ecclesiology was very much characterised by what may be called the concept of the Church as a "sanctuary",² where people are brought in, protected and helped to save their "souls".

1. Cf. CRI General Assembly, 1979; Archbishop Eugene D'Souza, "Rethinking Mission Policies", VIDYAJYOTI, November 1979; All India Seminar on "Theologising in India", organized by the C.B.C.I. Commission for Seminaries, 1979; Inculturation Commission Appointed by the Jeruit Conference of India, etc.

2. Joseph VELAMKUNNEL, "Mission Stations: Centres of Conscientization", VIDYAJYOTI 1978, pp. 102-103.

Post-Vatican theology emphasises the sign-aspect of the Church. In broad terms we could also speak of three phases in the understanding of religious life and, consequently, of the nature of formation.

We could think of a time when religious life was considered almost exclusively as "dedication to God", a "surrendering of oneself" to God's service, often in an exaggerated sense of "fleeing from the world" to save oneself. The vows were thought to be the supreme means of realizing this goal. For example, through the vow of chastity one is directing one's whole love to Jesus. He becomes the exclusive object of human love, which satisfies all human needs; Jesus is understood as the only and unique spouse of the female religious. Statements like, "Prayer first, work second", would express such an understanding of religious life. Service to the people was considered an expression of this love for God.

We could speak of a second phase in the evolution of the concept of religious life: religious life as the privileged expression of the mystery of the Church. The religious orders were considered to be at the service of the Church which itself continued to be conceived as a "sanctuary". According to this particular understanding of the Church, the gift of vocation is not for oneself but for the Church; the religious are a symbol of the presence of the Church in the world; congregations are to be at the disposal of the Bishop (not too rarely, of the Parish priest !). The apostolate of the religious must be considered an extension of parish activity and is confined within the limits of the parish. The emphasis is on the Church-centredness of religious life.

But there has come about a third phase: religious life at the service of the people. The purpose of religious life is for the growth of humanity. Its particular contribution to the world depends on a special charism and on the needs of the times. It is a specific contribution because of its religious finality. The religious live in the midst of the world, and, rooted in Christ, bear witness to him. Prayer is apostolic; the vows are apostolic; personal sanctification is through apostolic opportunities and in view of the apostolate. In this particular understanding of religious life, religious are within the Church, yet their apostolic witness is not simply directed to the visible Church but to the world towards which the "sign-Church" is pointing.

Often enough, the set-up of a religious community, the pattern of prayer, the terms of reference for the choice of apostolic priorities, etc., follow one or the other of the models of the Church. Often too, what hampers changes in apostolic priorities and formation programmes is the particular understanding of the Church and of religious life which is being entertained.

Another theological element which seems to bear heavily on the nature of formation is the understanding of the mission of the Church. There has been some evolution in the teaching of the Church regarding its self-understanding and the nature of evangelization. The purpose of evangelization is not merely the transformation of individual lives but also the collective transformation of society.³ It includes not only the annunciation of the Good News but also the denunciation of sin and sinful structures.⁴ Evangelization of culture would mean the evangelization of relations as these are mediated through the socio-economic and political realities of life. This would require reinterpreting the original religious charism, the understanding and articulation of which was conditioned by the culture of the past. Sometimes we find religious congregations struggling to bring about changes in their apostolic orientations and formation patterns, without adequate supportive changes in their theological perspectives.

Because religious life and formation are oriented to the apostolate, the demands of the apostolate today must be examined. This is a very complex reality and calls for scientific analysis. Besides faith and theology, the tools of social sciences help us to determine priorities and modes of operation. They have an indispensable role to play: anthropology, sociology, economics, politics, etc., will have to enter into formation programmes and affect them substantially.

If the apostolate consists in bringing more individuals into the fold of the Church, formation must equip the candidates with tools for reaching out effectively to responsive groups, v.g. language proficiency. If in India the apostolate is considered to consist in the struggle for social justice, the candidates must be offered the tools for this: v.g. socio-political analysis, techniques for building up people's movements. If healing individuals or helping the poor are considered to be the objective of the apostolate, what is needed is to train agents of charity. But if, on the other hand, we have become aware that the poor are poor because they are exploited, then we need to train well-informed and committed agents of social change. Then too, the social sciences will enter into our formation programmes, not merely as useful additional courses, but as basic disciplines, offering a context for formation which will affect the thinking pattern itself.

II. Indian Social Reality

The mission of the religious in India is the evangelization of persons as well as of the structures of our society. Given the various

3. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nn. 18-19.

4. Declaration of the All India Consultation on Evangelization, n. 27, in *Light and Life We Seek to Share*, p. 373.

social groups, and the limited resources and personnel at our command, we have to make apostolic choices. Formation will have to be in view of the apostolic priorities. These are determined by the concrete needs of the people. Let us examine some of the elements that make up the Indian social reality.

Illiteracy and Mass Poverty

India is predominantly an agricultural country. Small and marginal peasants along with a large number of middle peasants constitute the vast base of Indian agriculture. The bottom 40% of the population have hardly any land at all, while the top 10% hold 60% of the total land.⁵ The land reforms have hardly altered this situation.⁶ More than 250 million people live at or just above the poverty line, while as many live well below the line.⁷ The poverty line is defined as the "minimum required diet for moderate activity", i.e. 2250 calories costing per day roughly 1.50-2.00 rupees. Poverty and illiteracy go together among the socially deprived classes. Literacy among the scheduled castes is 14.67%, and among the scheduled tribes 11.3%. In the whole country the literacy rate is about 30 per cent. Among scheduled caste women the literacy rate is as low as 4.85%. In some of the States of N. India the situation is incredible. The literacy rate among scheduled caste women in Bihar is only 1.03 per cent, in Rajasthan 1.25 per cent, and in U.P. 2.46 per cent.⁸

Bonded Labour

Not too long ago the Gandhi Peace Foundation and the National Labour Institute, with the active support of the Union Ministry for Labour, conducted a national survey on the incidence of bonded labour in India.⁹ The discoveries are really alarming. The survey showed that 66 per cent of the bonded labourers belong to the scheduled castes, while 18.3 per cent belong to the scheduled tribes. But 84.2% of the masters are caste Hindus. One may think that bonded labour is a rare phenomenon in India. But it is not so. Among the agricultural workers in the Northern States, Bihar has 1.11 lakhs (1.17%) bonded labourers, while Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have 4.67 lakhs (11.8%) and 4 lakhs (11.8%), respectively.

5. Duarte BARRETO, *India's Search for Development and Social Justice*, 2: Indian Situation, p. 41.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

8. "Literacy Statistics at a Glance", *Directorate of Adult Education*, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Part III.

9. "Bonded Labour", Papers Circulated from ISI Documentation Centre.

Atrocities on the Harijans

A careful reading of the newspapers would give a fairly clear picture of the happenings in the States. In an article entitled, "Born to Misery", *India Today* has published the following figures compiled from official sources. They cover a period of seven months, January to July, 1978.¹⁰

States	Registered Cases of	
	Murder	Rape
Uttar Pradesh	89	94
Madhya Pradesh	36	64
Bihar	41	58
Gujarat	26	6
Rajasthan	39	39
Maharashtra	7	14
Haryana	4	8
Others	21	23
	<hr/> 263	<hr/> 306

Names like Belchi, Rupetha, Vellupuram, Bishrampoor remind one of the atrocities committed on the "anawims" of Indian society.

Power Structures

When we look at the social reality of India, we see two social groups. One is characterised by a sense of dependence, exploitation and hopelessness; this group is found predominantly, but not exclusively, in the rural areas and consists in the vast illiterate majority. Some call it "the culture of silence", because of its helplessness to raise its voice before the legitimate guardians of law and justice. The Harijans, scheduled castes, tribes, the impoverished caste Hindus, the women in general, slum dwellers, etc., largely constitute this section of society. The other group is endowed with economic, socio-political and knowledge power. Most of the westernised and semi-westernised section, the rural landlords, the urban businessmen, the upper and middle class population of India come under this group. The power to make decisions affecting the destiny of the masses is in their hands. The legislative members (MLAs and PMs), the executive (police, SDO, D.M., etc.), and the judiciary (advocates, judges), the educationalists, and the policy makers of the country emerge from this section of the population. Economic disparity follows, by and large, the caste lines. Even though the division is not absolute, yet power is almost exclusively in the hands of this group. The religious of India are called to work for the transformation of a society divided by the caste system, and characterised by wide-spread illiteracy and social injustice.

10. *India Today*, October 1-15, 1979.

III. Religious Formation Alienated from the Masses through Insertion into the Elite Culture

In the light of the above, let us proceed to a critical look at some aspects of the present formation of religious. We view it from two angles: its apostolic character and its spiritual content.

Often enough, one starts the discussion on religious formation with the assumption that the present pattern is neutral in its social content. One would grant readily that improvements are called for to make formation more effective, within the existing value system. Consequently one would concede the need for a clearer social orientation, but not for radical change. If, however, formation is in view of the elite, it is not in favour of the masses. In terms of population, if the type of formation imparted is geared to catering to the needs of the higher 20% of the population, it ill-equips religious to meet the needs of the vast majority. In other words, formation cannot simply be neutral with regard to its value content. There is a close link — a structural link — between the apostolic choices religious are likely to make after their formation and the choices they have consistently made, the tendencies they have manifested, the apostolic orientation they have cultivated or the value system they have cherished during the years of formation. Our effort here is to examine the formation houses, which condition the young religious in their apostolic orientation and spiritual life.

A. Life-Style

Life-style is a term which includes a host of items like food habits, clothing, customs, etc. It would be educative to examine certain areas of life which individually may not seem to inculcate a counter value system, but cumulatively do foster a definite set of values which does not seem to contribute to an apostolic formation for the service of the poor. The value system, manifested in various ways in a formation house, is gradually appropriated by those in formation. The values and life-style cherished by the formation personnel significantly influence the trainees. The climate of the house, the living conditions prevalent in it affect the content of formation, perhaps more than does the teaching on the charism of the order. It looks as if we are engaged in a self-defeating and contradictory process: the type of formation inherited from the past and geared to the elite of Indian society inhibits the formation desired for the evangelization of the poor.

“Spoon and Fork Culture”. Various cultures have their food habits and table manners. Using spoon and fork is the common way of eating in western countries. In India where do we find forks and

knives used habitually? The sophisticated restaurants, the religious communities and perhaps the most westernised elites of the country offer these articles at meals. The vast majority of hotels and restaurants in India and families at large do not have them. What would be the value system introduced into the mind of a boy or a girl who enters the prenovitiate or the candidacy and is carefully instructed into the "decent ways" of eating? Meticulous training is imparted in the art of holding and using these implements and even of placing them before and after meals. At every vacation the candidates go back to their families to eat with their hands. Here we see the beginnings of the slow process of alienation of candidates from their families. Arguments are sometimes put forward that large communities cannot function efficiently without forks and knives. They may offer some advantages. But there are hundreds of hostels in the Indian sub-continent which function—though definitely less efficiently than religious communities. What about the smaller communities, v.g. in the mission stations, where it would seem that those items are also indispensable? Is a particular value system underlying the use of these articles and the psychological need they have produced in us? So many religious coming from the South know so little about the food habits and the "eating manners" of the people of the North. From the point of view of pastoral formation, this is deplorable. Many of us could increase our ability to share people's convictions, their values and their culture.

Recreations: Language and Content. Let us begin with the most obvious: the language habitually used in the formation houses in the North. There seems to be a need for a certain proficiency in English for inter-cultural contacts between the various regions of India and, therefore, for keeping English in the national centres of formation. However, we have only a few such houses. Yet English seems to be the officially accepted language in a large number of communities of N. India. Language is more than a vehicle of ideas. It is a medium of culture. How could a South Indian missionary enter into the culture of the people in the North if most of his reading material and conversation is in another language? In public gatherings do we not stand out as an elite group, isolating ourselves from the common man by entertaining each other in English?

It would be interesting to look into the content of our recreations. How much of it is related to the vital problems of our people, like wages, food, corruption, injustices inflicted on the Harijans, etc.? As soon as one picks up the newspaper or the magazines, what are the types of news one is likely to look into first? Politics? sports? social problems? cartoons? violation of human rights? Where does the

interest lie in our day to day life ? No doubt, we love the people of this country. But there seems to be a priority in our areas of concern which leans towards the elite of our society.

Community Celebrations. Communities are built up through group celebrations. Celebration through songs, entertainments, decoration of places and objects create and express certain value systems. And these are finally stabilised in certain mental patterns. A significant phenomenon found in a number of recreation rooms, parlours and notice boards, is the presence of wall charts of banners made of coarse materials like coir or jute, with captions like "Smile, God loves you", "Lift up your heart!", etc. Such props would seem to be reminders about smiling in order to be somebody. Yet, by and large, they are restricted to religious communities — not being found in any significant degree in homes, even among the elite. In some places we find crude unpolished stones and rough pieces of wood laid out in the corridors and in recreation rooms. What would be the origin of such decorative items ? Could they be considered an expression of indigenous artistic creativity ? Or do they show that we imitate western religious communities, each particular variety representing the culture where the mother house is located ? One could pause for a moment over the decorations in the chapels and halls of our houses, to see if and how much Indian symbolism is present there. Man is creative. But what is, in our case, the source of inspiration or the model for imitation ? The mass culture ? the elite culture ? the western culture ? An in-depth study should be made of the captions and symbolic content of the advertisements appearing in reviews like *The Illustrated Weekly*, *India Today*, *News Week*, etc. These project man into a fantasy world. The mythical patterns or the archetypes behind decorations, celebrations, secular ideologies and advertisements found in the reviews, seem to have a common value content. Are we indiscriminately imparting this to the younger religious ? Are our community celebrations based on such motifs ? Could we not go back to our cultural roots to seek inspiration for the modern generation ? Can not the national experiences of poverty, oppression, violence, etc., stimulate our creative genius, provided we are sufficiently in touch with the masses ? We really want to build up generous and self-sacrificing communities; but, perhaps, our efforts are rendered, at least partially, futile because we have excluded, often unconsciously, from our self-awareness, the Indian masses struggling for survival. Elitist celebrations can produce only more elitist needs and urges.

One could fruitfully look into many other customs, games, songs for entertainments during community gatherings: the blowing of the

birthday candles, toasts, the content of dramas and skits put up on various occasions. Which are the virtues and social qualities held in high esteem and inculcated into the candidates? Which is the language, idiom and mode of expression most painstakingly instilled into the young religious in the early period of formation? There seems to be a process of systematic conditioning of the younger religious to a culture different from the one in which they were born and which is shared by the people at large. Sometimes we come across novices beautifully dressed in uniforms, wearing neckties and shoes and stockings. Even in summer they are supposed to use all these, if not the whole day, at least for the Eucharistic celebration. It is true that a certain external decorum is helpful to enter into the mystery of God, but this could be achieved otherwise than by introducing symbols of social elitism into the novitiate. There seems to be an organised formation-mechanism through which religious are gradually being inserted into the elite culture and made to feel that their rightful place is in the elite society. Perhaps, unconsciously, the young religious may be identifying the call to religious life with this insertion into the elite. François Houtart, after an extensive sociological survey and analysis of the Church in Sri Lanka, pointed out in his report certain attitudes of the clergy and religious in that country. He observed:

... The clergy and the religious resemble very much... the westernized (bourgeois) elites; there exists between the clergy and the lay elites a common culture whose origin may be attributed to the fact of westernization. Although the majority of the clergy and religious were not born into this social milieu, their training has had the effect of establishing them very strongly in the cultural outlook of the dominant social groups.¹¹

Sociologically speaking, the situation of the Church and the religious in India is not very different from that of Sri Lanka. The same cultural uprooting and transplanting has taken place. The needs—psychological, social, etc.—created through certain training programmes cannot be adequately met except in communities modelled on the formation houses. In this context we must not forget the impact of westernisation through technology, films and city education. The young are definitely being influenced by this process. An essential requirement of apostolic formation seems to be helping the young to sort out positive values from western influences.

B. Formation Personnel: Models for Imitation

The process of formation is the cumulative effect of a number of formative factors. Instruction on the spirit of the Institute is only

11. F. HOUTART, *Religion and Ideology in Sri Lanka*, as quoted by Robert CURRIE, *The Church, Credible Sign of Liberation*, p. 47.

one among them. The life-style of the house is another. There is yet a third source of formative influence: the living models of the spirit of the congregation. While instruction presents a vision of reality to the youngsters, the formation personnel sets before their eyes models in tangible form. Let us, then, examine the influence of the formation personnel on the quality of formation.

We could think of two kinds of formation personnel from the point of view of their involvement in the actual planning and implementation of the formation programmes: those in charge of the formation houses and the elder members of the religious order. The values they cherish in their own lives should lend credibility to their teaching. Thus the ongoing formation of the formed religious is important for the effective formation of the younger ones. The formation personnel themselves should undergo a process of re-education in the spirit of the order, whereby they will present themselves to those in formation as models of a continued search for deepening the spirit of the Institute. Their commitment to the new visions offered by General Chapters will be a challenge to the younger members who are also to be formed in the newer insights into that spirit. Their commitment would reveal an attitude of detachment from their own past conditionings, and witness to a freedom of spirit which moves in tune with the times. The younger members also come into the order with some set ideas and attitudes which call for readjustments. The formation personnel can convincingly challenge those in formation only if they first allow themselves to be challenged by the General Chapters of the Order and by the signs of the times. The formative influence of superiors in such circumstances does not lie so much in prescribing acts of obedience as in imparting a new vision and in awakening inner dynamism for its realisation. If a particular religious congregation is professedly committed to the promotion of justice or to the service of the poor, yet a sizeable and influential section of its personnel is engaged in work for the elite class, the formation of the younger members into a committed band of men or women standing up for the cause of the poor is likely to suffer. The whole thrust of the congregation is not presented in its full truth. A genuine conversion of hearts, a readjustment in the value system of members, an increase in the personnel orientating their lives in the direction of the poor will be the only effective way to give credibility to the values professed by the congregation. Or else, goodwill notwithstanding, misplaced efforts will eventually tend to create an elite within the congregation.

Besides teaching the young religious (who form part of the elite of Indian society), what apostolic contacts do our formation per-

sonnel have? It should be a matter of honest examination and serious concern that so few of them have any sustained contact with the poor deep enough to transform their habits of thinking and feeling. It will remain difficult to motivate the younger members to give themselves to the poor if the whole formation house is not itself somewhat engaged in their struggle. The exposure to the poor of those in formation must be thought of as part of the common concern of the entire community for the poor, rather than as a phase in the formation programme. In the latter understanding, difficulties in motivation are bound to arise. As long as young religious remain in formation, they will, perhaps, posit symbolic acts of service to the poor, but their commitment to their cause will remain very limited.

One may feel, perhaps, that the questions which have been raised here tend to present a caricature of formation houses and personnel. The actual situation surely is not so disappointing! Yet quite a few in India are seriously disturbed with our religious formation. Bishop Saupin of Daltonganj, in an address to the CRI major superiors, observed the following:

There is something that is constantly agitating my mind and my spirit, and that is the formation of our personnel. As we look around today at our houses of formation and the attitudes we give our young personnel, I feel that . . . we take them from one pattern of life and put them into another. I would think that in our houses of formation and in the formation techniques and programmes that we have, we build up in our young religious an upper middle class society mentality. They come to our novitiates and we give them all the facilities, and put them into a cultural bracket that is away from rural poverty. There are experiments, granted, when we send them back to this milieu; but is there a constant commitment to discovery? I really wonder. There are many excellent religious somehow formed in ways which give them upper middle class mentality attitudes and, if I may say so, spirituality.¹²

The elements we have examined so far point to the presence in our formation houses of a culture different from the one in which most of our young religious were born as well as from that in which the marginalised masses live. Even though many of those items may look small in themselves, they have a cumulative effect on formation. True, social awareness programmes are introduced into formation; and these are very useful. However, by and large, formation houses in the North still preserve many of the characteristics described above; and hence the final product remains far from satisfactory. In proportion to the intensity of "elitisation", the distance is greater between our young religious and the poor sections of Indian society. In short

12. Bishop SAUPIN, Key-Note Address at CRI General Assembly, 1979.

three concomittant mental operations are taking place in the young during their years of formation: alienation from their own native culture, alienation from the poor, and finally insertion into the elite culture. The result is that many are likely to be attracted by the apostolate to the elite, to feel more competent for that kind of apostolate and more at home in the life-style it promises. Indeed, because the young have been made to assimilate the elite value system and attitudes, they are likely to think in terms of elite culture, even in the apostolate of liberation of the poor. Thus, elitist tendencies inculcated during the formation period create mechanisms for their perpetuation in the models of apostolate, in religious communities and personal life-styles.

C. *Spiritual Formation and Alienation from the Masses*

Spiritual formation involves several elements, such as spiritual experiences, the conditions created to realize them, etc. The circumstances of life, personal contacts, one's habitual desires, interests, aspirations, the world-view one holds, etc., to some extent condition the manner of prayer. For these are not neutral experiences; all of them influence the mind and feelings, and consequently the manner in which one receives God's action and responds to it. Prayer experience implies an interplay of two freedoms in the heart of man. In this section let us turn to certain features of our spiritual formation, as they manifest themselves in the prayers we use. We shall examine three types of prayers: the official liturgical prayer of the Missal; prayers of the faithful; and finally one of the hymn books commonly used in India. These various kinds of prayers describe faith-experiences, as well as the means of awakening them. Let us look into the social content of the experiences they convey.

(A) *Liturgical Prayers* (opening prayers & prayers after communion)

<i>Centred on:</i>	<i>Advent</i>	<i>Lent</i>	<i>Easter</i>	<i>Ordinary</i>	<i>Total</i>
Heaven	13	23	50	24	110
Sin in general	6	25	4	10	45
Protection, guidance	10	24	11	10	65
Love in general	1	5	8	5	19
Love centred on the Christian community	—	5	7	12	22
Brotherly love including non-Christians	—	2	4	9	15
Love of God, desire for Christ	17	22	16	55	110

(B) *Prayers of the Faithful* (86 sheets published from Allahabad: Hindi and English Samples taken from three years)

Year	Universal Church	Particular Christian life in general	Church Brotherly love including non-Christian	Social India	Changes World
1977	46	26	7	1	19
1978	53	30	1	7	26
1979	53	35	4	5	32
Total:	152	91	12	13	77

(C) *Praise the Lord* (Hymn Book)

Individual centred: "I" expression	Ecclesial centred: "We" expression	Mixture of "I" and "We" including non-Christians	Social concern including non-Christians	Hymn from Scripture
174	67	12	11	158

The findings of the analysis are self-explanatory. The *liturgical prayers* are overwhelmingly heaven and God-centred. Obviously these were composed years ago. There have been enormous socio-political changes through the upheavals of world history, and important changes in philosophical and theological thinking. We wonder if these changes are reflected in these prayers. Are the world-views, symbolisms and needs represented in them expressive of our search for the promotion of justice, which is a constitutive part of evangelization? Identifying ourselves with these formulas, can we express the deepest needs of our people?

The word "justice" appears just twice in 86 sets of *prayers for the faithful*. Issues like communal harmony, the removal of corruption from civic life, oppression of the Harijans, social reforms, structural changes in the economic system, etc., are not present in any significant way, if not totally absent. "India" appears only a few times. The necessity of structural changes for social transformation seems to be totally ignored. Admittedly, before drawing any definite conclusions, it must be remembered that, besides these prayers, spontaneous intentions are added in many places.

In the same way, one must remember that not all the hymns contained in *Praise to the Lord* are sung in every formation house; nor is it the only Hymn Book used in religious communities, even though it happens to be quite commonly used in gatherings of religious. It is also true that some of the hymns could be classified under more than one category. Nevertheless, the low proportion of hymns with social content needs to be taken seriously because of the consequences for

formation. A large section of these hymns could be sung in the west and the word "we" would be standing for the Christian community, almost identical, in some cases, with the whole nation. Here in India, the "we" indicates a Christian community that represents 2% of the total population. In our context then, out of 409 hymns, about 11 hymns can be considered to express sentiments common to both Christians and the believers of other religions. How far are the religious communities identified with people and their groanings? Are we placing ourselves in a spiritual vacuum where we no longer hear the cry of the poor and distract ourselves singing alleluias? Are we immunising ourselves against the disturbing pleas of the voiceless? We may be, unconsciously perhaps, seeking an introvert, elitist, spiritual experience to reassure one another: "I am fine. You are fine. Praise the Lord!" If the Lord can touch me through "loving and being loved", is he not able to make his presence felt in me through the experience of rejection and helplessness of the millions of India?

Presupposing that no Christian would want to exclude non-Christians from his concerns and prayers, at least in the ideal moments of his Christian experience, we may have to look for an explanation for the deficiency of our hymns. The reason may, perhaps, be found in the implicit philosophic premises of the West where so many of them were composed. In the recent past Western Christian communities have become aware that the prevalent spirituality, influenced by scholasticism, was highly intellectual. They felt the need of bringing into it the emotional "heart-dimension" of religion. A dissatisfaction with the impersonal relationships existing in highly technological societies gave greater impetus to the search for meaningful relationships. The discoveries of depth psychology, the insights into the neurosis of "modern man in search of his soul" also contributed to the search for personalised religion. Efforts made along this line have resulted in a spurt of hymns expressive of the personal, affective aspect of religion; its communitarian dimension is also stressed. However, in as much as the richest Christian nations continue to exploit the rest of the world, the question can be raised whether the communitarian feelings expressed are authentically open to mankind or only voice a sense of well-being within the confines of a narrow sect. Capitalism is the economic outcome of the philosophy of liberalism. Its spiritual counterpart is "privatised" spirituality and self-centred devotional practices—a sectarian spirituality which seeks to reassure its adherents of the love and benevolence of God. In the absence of a true openness, embracing believers of other religions and especially the unwanted of Indian society, the "I" expressions of our hymns only witness to the self-

centredness of our spiritual preoccupations, and the "we" expressions stretch out to include other "I"s with similar interests. Individualistic liberalism is showing its ugly face in spiritual strivings.

A subtle manipulation of God seems to be present in the search for "pure religious" solutions to emotional problems. Such problems come under the analysis and curative techniques of behavioural sciences which are really part of God's activity in the world. Tendencies to self-exaltation could be cleverly hidden, if unconsciously, in attempts to situate "faith-problems" or "theological problems" in the strictly affective area of human life. To admit to having an emotional problem or mental disorder does not seem as respectable in our society today as having a theological problem, which connotes in man depth of intelligence and a reflective capacity. Thus, to resort to religious solutions for psychological problems makes the person look respectable and acceptable in society.

The religious climate of our formation houses and apostolic communities affects the spiritual formation of religious. The elements subjected above to criticism are not without positive values. But, in the context of our socio-economic problems in India, they seem to point to an incomplete experience of reality. The anachronistic repetition of medieval prayers and categories, the efforts at imposing them on the simple Christians of N. India, and the transfer of European cultural and religious needs to the Indian context — all these can be a subtle escape from facing the social reality of the Indian masses. Conflicts between the type of spirituality presented during the years of formation and the type required to support the apostolate in later years should be a matter of serious concern for those in charge of formation.

(to be continued)

Effective Preaching

V. M. DASAN, S.J.

PREACHING is still one of the most powerful vehicles for proclaiming God's Word, even though we are painfully aware of our people's apathy towards it. But their apathy is not to the Word of God but to our way of proclaiming it. Their long experience of listening to sermons in the Church has not been what it could have been and therefore they come to them with low expectation and often a negative attitude. It is a challenge to us preachers to restructure our preaching, to revitalize it, and to use contemporary material and modern communication techniques to give it spontaneity and relevance, while at the same time keeping the theological content sound and strong.

Any effective preaching should include four basic elements of effective communication. These are: the preacher, the message, the medium, and the hearer. Communication being a dynamic process, it is impossible to separate these elements from one another. However, for purposes of analysis we will isolate the four ingredients and try to show what each ought to be like to render the act of preaching effective.

1. *The Preacher*

"The perfect orator", says Quintilian, "as the very first essential should be a good man."¹ The effective preacher needs to have a good character with right attitudes. Good character calls for integrity and morality, open-mindedness and fairness, courage and maturity. We find that the words of the prophets, the teaching of Jesus Christ and the apostles and the speeches of even ordinary men, such as Abraham Lincoln, acquire their power in large measure from moral integrity.

The essence of Christianity being unselfish love for God and man, a self-centred preacher will never attract his listeners to Christian life.² To be fair he must have an open mind. He prepares his sermon after having heard and considered the ideas, arguments and problems on

1. H. E. BUTLER, *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp. 1, 9.

2. Raymond W. McLAUGHLIN, *Communication for the Church* (Zondervan Publishing House, 1968), p. 72.

the subject proposed or suggested by others; and when he speaks, he does not even hint that he knows everything. With courage he proclaims the truth he is convinced of and without the slightest hint of obstinacy, he refuses to compromise the truth just to please the crowd. If spiritually mature, he lives by the Spirit, and as St Paul demands of those who belong to Christ, he "has crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal. 5: 24).

Built into the preacher's character, so to say, is right attitude: towards himself, towards his subject and towards his listeners.³ Right attitude towards himself makes him aware of his strengths and weaknesses. Accordingly he will come well prepared, show confidence and humility and deliver his message in a disciplined way. Right attitude towards his subject requires that he believe himself in his message, that he be free from fanatical bias and that he prepare and structure his sermon carefully. Right attitude towards his listeners calls for due respect for their dignity and worth. Concern and liking for them and still more love will be in his heart and in his attitude in the pulpit. For certain, then, he will shun aloofness and still more superiority; rather, he will identify himself with them. While he tries not only to get his message accepted but also internalized, he will eschew even the slightest coercion, but leave his listeners entirely free, providing them with information and the impulses they need to work on themselves.⁴

Sound knowledge makes the preacher reliable. At his command is a fund of general and extensive knowledge about men and matters, of individual and social ethics, of liberal arts, in a word, of whatever could serve as illuminating and effective background to his preaching on a particular subject. He serves as the medium through which the accumulated wisdom and experiences of the past are channelled to others. Cicero said: "No man can be an orator. . . unless he has attained the knowledge of everything important."⁵ Apart from this general knowledge, the preacher makes a thorough study of the specific subject of his sermon; otherwise, his effectiveness would be sharply curtailed.

The reliability of the preacher also depends on his ability to make sound judgments and to value things in their proper perspective. For this he needs to develop a healthy, balanced and mature mind. He cannot allow emotions to cloud his thinking and prejudice to blind him to objective reality. His set of values has to be beyond reproach so

3. Alan H. MONROE, *Principles and Types of Speech Communication* (Scott, Foresman and Company, Glenview, Illinois, 1974), p. 74.

4. McLAUGHLIN, p. 74.

5. J. S. WATSON, *Cicero On Oratory and Orators* (Philadelphia: David McKay, Publishers, 1897), p. 17.

that his value judgments are sound. To be objective is difficult. "To see the facts through the haze of emotions, to let them filter through, to keep still and let the facts do the talking", said Franklin Roosevelt, "is an achievement."⁶ However, the preacher has to cultivate this.

An element that is not essential but helpful is personableness. The presence of the preacher attracts the attention of the listeners and appeals to them. Physical appearance becomes a silent but eloquent factor in effective communication. How he conducts himself, his carriage, poise, forcefulness and even his dress — all these help towards his effectiveness.⁷ In some this presence may not only draw the eyes but inspire the heart.

The preacher, whether naturally gifted to speak or not, is expected to acquire a knowledge of communication, of what to do and what to avoid when speaking, and the skill to use it. Even talented artists take instruction. So too, every preacher should train himself scientifically in the basic skills of communication: speaking, writing, reading and listening.⁸ Mastery of communication skills has direct bearing on the communication process; otherwise, most of Aristotle's writings on speaking would not deal with communication skills.⁹

2. The Message

The message in effective preaching must be valuable in itself, and to the preacher and listeners. The fact that it deals with some aspect of God's revelation makes it valuable in itself. To the preacher it becomes valuable if by entering into his heart it makes him a better person. To the listeners it is valuable if by the way it is presented the message of revelation brings new life to them.

When the preacher, having deeply realized and experienced what God says about himself and man's life in a particular facet of his revelation in Christ, articulates his realization for his contemporaries so that they too enter into the saving action of God in Christ, then, that becomes a valuable message. So, not the facts, not catechetical answers, not theological propositions and not a moral value judgment, but the meaning of facts having eternal consequences makes the message valuable.¹⁰

6. Franklin Delano ROOSEVELT, "Trademarks of Quality", *Chicago Daily Times*, November 29 1938, p. 17.

7. Mark L. KNAPP, *Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, INC, New York, 1972), pp. 64-79

8. George E. SWEAZEY, *Preaching the Good News* (Prentice-Hall, INC, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1976), p. 1.

9. ARISTOTLE, *The Rhetoric* (Appleton-Century, Crofts, New York, Meredith Corporation, 1976).

10. DOMENICO GRASSO, S.J., *Proclaiming God's Message* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1965), p. 21.

The message springs forth from a personal experience of a theological insight into the meaning of divine revelation. The preacher is totally involved in speaking what he believes and in the message the whole person must speak. The message is so personalized by the speaker that he is able to recreate that personalized revelation for the listeners.¹¹

Before one proclaims a truth, he must possess it; otherwise, though it may be God's word, it will not be a witness. The reason why the apostles were taken seriously by the first Christians, whenever they spoke of Christ, was that they were known to be "eye witnesses". So too, he who preaches after having "witnessed" the transforming power of God's grace in Jesus, will be heard attentively. If he has not given his response to the call of Christ, "Take up your cross and follow me", he cannot expect to elicit a response from the listeners, not because there is nothing in the call, but because there is no proof in his life to show that such a response is possible and worth giving.

There may be elements such as bricks, woods, nails available, which are valuable for building a house. But if they are not structured we can't make a building out of them. So also, a preacher may have valuable points, major and minor, to make in his preaching. But, if they are not properly structured, he may not be able to get across a message. Therefore a message must be structured.

For a message to be structured, clarity, unity, coherence and emphasis are essential. To make sure of clarity the entire message may be formulated into one sentence kernel. For instance, to preach on the story of the tower of Babel from Gen 2: 1-9, one may well summarize the whole message thus: "Man's attempt to become a god, always fails." Having a single idea, the sermon secures unity. In such a sermon there is coherence between points, one point flowing from and leading to another progressively with logical connection. All the points hang together in order to make one point. With all these, there will also be proper emphasis. The preacher dwells on a major point longer than on a sub-point, thus avoiding "elephantiasis", which means spending the wrong amount of time in wrong places.¹²

As in a human body the bones are supported by flesh, sinews and muscles, so in effective preaching major points, which are like the bones, are supported by different such aids as explanation, analogy, illustration, specific instance, statistics, testimony and restatement.¹³

11. John BURKE, O. P., *Gospel Power* (Alba House, New York, 1978), pp. 13-14.

12. SWEAZEY, pp. 74-80.

13. MONROE, pp. 300-314.

An explanation is what the word conveys. An analogy relates the known to the unknown. An illustration makes the point come alive. Specific instance, which is shorter than illustration, makes the material vivid. Statistics uses numbers to support a point. Testimony uses authoritative statements on the lives of others. Restatement is repeating the same thing in a different way.

3. *The Medium*

In a sermon communication takes place directly through the media of sound and sight. Physically considered these would include the preacher's appearance, his action, voice and words. These physical media form one aspect of delivery.

Effective preaching depends much on this delivery. The efficiency and skilful use of these physical channels will shape the sermon's outcome. Delivery and content cannot be separated, as confusing ideas render delivery confused. On the other hand, an unpleasant voice with poor pronunciation makes even a well thought out idea ineffective.

Bodily action consists of posture, gesture, facial expression and eye contact.

Posture can speak by itself. Suppose the preacher's posture is too casual; then, he has told the congregation without opening his mouth that his sermon can be taken lightly. But if the posture is too rigid, he would be taken for a stiff person and therefore deserving a stiff response. One has to avoid these two extremes. Posture must be comfortable, giving the speaker plenty of latitude for bodily action and putting the listeners at ease in his company.

Effective gestures are natural and appropriate. They are dictated by the idea and mood of the sermon. For example, when I preach on love, pounding the podium with a fist would be inappropriate; but during a sermon on anger it is not. Good gestures not only convey the meaning of the word but accompany it. Both over-abundance and complete absence of gestures may convey nervousness, and thus be distracting.¹⁴

The face of an effective preacher is the barometer of his sermon's thought and its emotional content, especially the latter. Speaking on world hunger, I cannot break into a beatific smile because that would indicate that I myself do not take the problem seriously. So too, no matter what one preaches on, if his face remains strangely immobile, he too fails. The eye can signify special meanings and delicate feelings which other organs can't. Hence a good speaker uses his eyes and

14. Ralph L. Lewis, *Persuasive Preaching Today* (Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore Kentucky, 1977), pp. 62-68.

looks upon the congregation, not simply as a crowd but a group of individual persons, remembering always that he is speaking as a person to other persons in the midst of persons.

What we hear is as important as what we see. A deep and resonant voice is naturally pleasant and hence has a good chance of eliciting positive response, but a high and squeaky voice, being unpleasant, runs the risk of eliciting negative response. The chief necessities for a pleasant voice are proper breathing, resonance, an open throat and articulation.

By proper breathing, one could enrich his voice, easily find its optimum pitch, prevent it from becoming breathy and even control his stage fright. An open throat adds strength to the quality of the voice. A resonant voice vibrating through the head is powerful. Good articulation is essential to speak distinctly. With lazy lips, tight jaws, and sluggish tongue, one can't articulate properly.

An effective voice has rhythm found in conversation, and melody as in music. It varies in pitch and forcefulness, appropriate to the thought and emotional content of the words. The tone reveals the preacher's honest feelings towards his subject.¹⁵

Words are the carriers of meaning and feeling. They convey much which dictionaries do not mention. Therefore a skill in the choice and usage of words and of their arrangement is very necessary.

Effective words make the meaning clear. "If even lifeless instruments such as the flute or the harp do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? So, if you in a tongue utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said?" (1 Cor 14: 7-9).

Words are precise. There is no place for over-verbalization and under-verbalization.¹⁶ To a man dying of thirst in the Sahara I can't give an explanation of the elements of water. All that the thirsty man needs is a "drink". So too, a point should require just those words that can adequately convey a point.

They are simple and direct. Words loaded with theological jargon are not necessary. Sometimes a technical term is required to cover detailed ideas, but it ought not to be overdone. Literary pretensions and rhetorical display often would be out of place. In a conversation words are simple and direct. Preaching which is an oral communication also should have this quality of a vital conversation.¹⁷

15. KNAPP, pp. 119-129.

16. LEWIS, pp. 68-76.

17. J. Daniel BAUMANN, *An Introduction to Contemporary Preaching* (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1972), p. 161.

18. BURKE, pp. 18-19.

They are concrete and not merely abstract. A word may be doctrinally correct, but if it does not relate to the listeners' experience of life, then its meaning becomes irrelevant. Concrete words not only make the meaning clear to the mind but also dramatize it to the imagination of the listeners.¹⁹

They are familiar. They are taken from the ordinary usage of the people. Otherwise they will make the speaker appear a stranger to the listeners. Familiar words will help the speaker to establish a rapport with the audience. To speak with power one must sit where the people sit, not only experientially but also linguistically.

In church, besides physical channels there are also technical channels that form part of the medium. These technical channels are room arrangement, acoustical set up, public address system and lighting and so forth. A proper care given to improve these channels, wherever and whenever needed, would help adjust the sound and light waves which carry the message of the speaker into the minds of the hearers.

It is not enough just to possess a set of efficient physical apparatus as just described. The preacher is expected to know how to use them skilfully. A skilful use would require that the preacher analyses the purpose of his preaching and chooses the most effective channel or channels suited to achieve that purpose. Often he may have to use more than one channel. Normally he would increase the chances of reaching out into the minds of the hearers effectively, if he does this not only through the medium of hearing but also by way of sight and touch. This is why use of visual aids is becoming popular these days.²¹

A skilful preacher will attend also to the communication setting. Depending on when he preaches, morning or evening, on the interested or indifferent mood of the audience, on the level of their physical and mental distance from him, he must pick and choose the appropriate method of delivery, most suited to that particular setting.²²

A skilful use of the channels also means that the preacher coordinates the various channels that are at his disposal to convey the message. The different channels collaborate for one common purpose: to the imparting of the message. Suppose, I use the verbal channel to say: "God's love can be seen in the dependable orderly world". The non-verbal channel, for example my facial expression, should show confidence in order to support my message of God's love. If on the other hand

19. H. Grady DAVIS, *Design for Preaching* (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1958), pp. 271-272.

20. BAUMAN, p. 162.

21. McLAUGHLIN, p. 87.

22. MONROE, p. 133.

my facial expression is strained, which can be a sign of anxiety, I disprove what I say about God's love. So too, the communication setting in which I say this must be arranged in such a way that it too supports my premise that God's love is seen in the dependable world order. If on the other hand, bulletins are scattered all over, if pews are disorderly, if the altar cloth is left hanging askew, they disprove what I say about God's orderly world. The various channels therefore cooperate to convey the same message.²³

4. The Hearer

The general purpose of a sermon is to convey the Word of God to people, to make them good or better. People who are naturally somewhat good, with considerable ethical and moral integrity, impartiality and spiritual maturity, will make better hearers than those who are otherwise. Their response to preaching will be more positive.

A hearer as a good person is also one who has a proper attitude towards himself; namely, he does not take himself too seriously to feel the need to open himself to the message, nor does he downgrade himself so low that he distrusts his own chance for improvement. He has a proper attitude towards the subject, so that he listens with open mind, whatever may be his past and present convictions. His attitude towards the preacher leads him to listen in fairness and with courtesy.²⁴

A person may come to listen to a preaching event either for enjoyment or for information or for inspiration. It would be good if the person has made up his mind on the purpose of his listening. Mental and emotional readiness made in advance contribute to attentive listening. Proper response to what the speaker is saying would require an attentive mind. As the sermon progresses, the listener instead of getting strained must increase his attention. Otherwise communication between the preacher and the listener would fail, due to the listener's poor mental attitude and emotional blocks.²⁵

Mental preparation would also mean intellectual preparation. This means that the listener should have some fund of general knowledge and experience through readings and contacts; he is expected also to have done some private reading on the subject which the preacher would be dealing with in his sermon.

Not only mental and emotional but also physical preparation is needed for effective listening. There are physical factors such as

23. Merrill R. ABREY, *Communication in Pulpit and Parish* (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1952), pp. 37-38.

24. McLAUGHLIN, p. 88.

25. William D. THOMPSON, *A Listeners Guide to Preaching* (Abingdon Press, Nashville, New York, 1966), pp. 80-86.

fatigue, discomfort and hearing difficulty which are personal and have to be removed and corrected in advance. So also, there are physical factors such as poor ventilation, distracting noises, insufficient lighting which are environmental and have also to be removed before one begins to listen.²⁶

Such a knowledgeable and prepared listener would not only profit much from the preaching but also help the preacher to communicate effectively.

An intelligent hearer listens with some method, knows what are the basic elements in a normal structure of a well prepared formal sermon, and mentally looks for them in sequence. Those elements are: the introduction, the body and the conclusion. The preacher will begin with an attention getter such as an illustration or a quote; he will then state his basic theme or proposition in the introduction; then he will explain the basic theme by breaking it into parts and developing each part through supporting materials such as description, proofs, examples; then he will conclude either by summarizing the major points of his sermon or with an appeal. Not all preachers would follow this plan. But this is the classical method of a formal speech. Those hearers who are familiar with it would listen to most sermons intelligently and receive the message accurately.²⁷

A critical listener is one who will use his evaluative ability to distinguish between what is important and what is not; between a fact, an opinion and an interpretation in the preaching. He listens with an open mind. He will not allow the preacher's emotional expression to distract his mind from getting at the kernel of the message. He will supply by his own knowledge and intelligence, power of observation and sound judgment, for what may be lacking in the preacher's explanation and logic.²⁸

A hearer sympathetic towards the preacher shows him common courtesy and genuine interest in what he has to say. He knows that, if he manifests an expression of disgust through bodily action, he might discourage the speaker and hinder him from speaking clearly and forcefully.

Sympathetic listening does not mean that the listener's feed-backs should be always positive. While being courteous to the speaker, the listener can and ought to respond to the sermon actively during the sermon itself, by letting the preacher know how he feels and what he

26. THOMPSON, p. 75.

27. McLAUGHLIN, p. 93.

28. CHESTER PENNINGTON, *God Has a Communication Problem* (Hawthorn Books, INC, Clement Stone Publishers, 1976), p. 123.

thinks about the message and the way it is presented. The preacher is helped by the evident reaction of the congregation, whether negative or positive. The congregation does a service to the preacher if it lets him know the immediate effect of what he is doing. A preacher sensing the mood of the congregation from their non-verbal expressions, whether they are pleased, puzzled, approving, doubtful or amused, will be able to correct himself both in the content of his sermon and the manner of its delivery.²⁹

29. PENNINGTON, p. 78.

" Christ is African "

By respecting, preserving and fostering the particular values and riches of your people's cultural heritage, you will be in a position to lead them to a better understanding of the mystery of Christ, which is to be lived in the noble, concrete and daily experiences of African life. There is no question of adulterating the word of God, or of emptying the Cross of its power (cf 1Cor 1: 17), but rather of bringing Christ into the very centre of African life and of lifting up all African life to Christ. Thus not only is Christianity relevant to Africa, but Christ, in the members of his body, is himself African.

POPE JOHN PAUL II, *address to the bishops of Kenya, May 7, 1980*

Catholic Directory of India

The new Directory will be out by the middle of August. The delay is due to continuous power shortage in Delhi. The new Directory, unlike the 1977 edition, will contain the list and addresses of all the priests in India and will also have a four-page folder in black and white of the dioceses of India.

Notes

A New Church in a Tribal Area

The tribals of Zankhvav (Surat Dt.), Gujarat, can truly call the *Isunāth-Mandir* "their Church". In truth, the Church has been built by them and for them, and is of their culture. Once the need for a Church was felt, the idea was discussed with the elders of the locality the catechists, the Sisters and Fathers. A rough sketch was proposed to Fr. Carsi who finally prepared a very simple, but beautiful plan.

The selection of the artisans was made after a competition held at Zankhvav for adivasi wood-carvers and painters. The creativity of our aboriginals is clearly seen here, as we have made use of their aesthetic sense; their culture is truly the inspiration behind the Church.

1. The Church, the House of the Lord

1. The Church is *built on a hillock*, as many Adivasis believe that God dwells in a special way on hill-tops. They have to climb many steps, before they reach sacred places on high mountains. This signifies the spiritual struggle in our life: the ascent to the mountain of God.

2. The Mandir is *surrounded by a wall*, as tribals often build a hedge to protect their houses and maize-crops from wild animals and evil-spirits.

3. The Lord's House is *separated and apart* from other houses. It is characteristic of our tribals to build their dwellings far from each other. This does not mean that they are not sociable, but simply that they are an independent people, able to stand on their own feet.

4. *The exterior structure* of the Church is similar to that of some big houses of our Vasavas. They place the entrance on the lateral and longest side of their house. So too, the main doors of the Church are found on the lateral side, inviting all into the wide embrace of Christ.

5. It was customary among the Vasavas, that the elder son had to leave his paternal house, and settle down far away from his native place. He had to cut trees, cultivate the land, and build a house. He was called "the First Vasavo", i.e. the first inhabitant of the new settlement. The Church, more than a shrine, is the *House of the Lord Jesus*. He is our first "Vasavo", who had to leave the House of his Father to settle down (Jn 1, 14) in the forest of sin, and create a new house for us, a new Church, where we all live as brothers.

6. *The tiles*, which are seen on the edge of the roof, have five pointed spokes, like fingers. This represents the open hands and fingers of the tribals who originally did not greet with joined hands in the position

of *Namaste*, but welcomed people warmly with open hands and fingers.

H. Carved Doors

A. Lateral Entrance: Tribals' Salvation History

On the Southern side of the Church, there is a long "portico", with five beautifully carved doors and 32 panels, depicting the life of adivasis. Our Vasavas, Choudhris and Gamits interpret the universe in terms of the throbbing life of the jungle and the fields. They live in the midst of life. So, religious elements are found in the life-cycle of the individual and in the rhythmic changes of Nature.

1. Eight panels depict the *life-cycle of the individual*: new life, birth, love, wedding, sickness-witchcraft, pain, manual work and death.

2. Twenty four panels express religious responses to the *rhythmic changes of Nature*:

- a) i. *Akhatrideu*: Rites for the first sowing.— Life in the forest.— Rains.— *Nandervo*: Sprouting of greenery in the fields.
- ii. *Gavaniadeu*: Rites near the manger, to protect cattle from disease and evil spirits.— Life in the village.— *Sharad*: New grain is first offered to the ancestors, and then a meal is shared.— *Chuladevi*: Rites to the Goddess of the fire-place.
- b) i. *Rath*: When there is much sickness during the rains, the whole village is swept, and the rubbish is placed outside the village in a small cart to be thrown into a river.— Work in the forest.— *First fruits*: Joy and music.— *Norta*: Dancing girls.
- ii. *Ujvani*: Common meal, outside the village in thanksgiving for God's blessings.— Women, fishing.— *Dashera*: Local deities are worshipped by the *Gherias*, who go dancing from village to village.— *Deudivali*: They clean the house, and throw the "burning" rubbish into the trees.
- c) i. Adivasis carry in bullock-carts the agricultural products to be sold to the merchants.— *Duthmogra* (Milky crocodile): a totem, which is regarded as ancestor, or as supernaturally connected with an ancestor.— Common meal at a sacred mountain.
- ii. Sacrifice of fowls and goats at Duthmogra.— *Holi*: The end of an agricultural season and the beginning of spring.— *Holi-dance*.— Wedding at summer.

So, the religion of our adivasis arises from the bosom of Nature and pervades their agricultural life (two wall-paintings depict rice-transplanting and harvesting). They do believe that above Nature there is a Supernatural Power, leading them through pain and joy, through fears and hope to a better and a more lasting life. "History of Salvation" begins at the deepest level of their being. The seeds of Revelation are found in their culture, and the grace of Christ is hidden, but alive in their hearts.

B. Front-Door: Old Testament History of Salvation

1. It is said that the O.T. records the attempts of God's people to advance beyond the primitive. In fact, the strivings and stories of the Chosen people of God are very much to the liking of our adivasis. They not only understand them, but they enjoy the message of the Old Testament that leads them to Christ.

2. Eight panels evoke O.T. scenes: Creation, the Fall, the Ark of Noah, the Sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham, Joseph sold to the merchants by his brothers, the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses, the Crossing of the Red sea, and the Victory of David over Goliath.

3. The iron-grills portray events and people taking us nearer to Christ: annuntiation by the Angel to Mary, etc.

4. At the rear of the Church, there is a small room with a carved floor, depicting the parables of Christ's love for sinners: the Prodigal Son, the Lost Sheep, the Good Samaritan, and the Sinful Woman at the feet of Christ. This means that we have to reconcile ourselves with our neighbour before going into the House of the Father.

III. The Aisles: Christ's Words and Deeds

1. *Wall-paintings* (to the right): Christ, the Revealer of God's saving plan of salvation.— Christ, the Guru, showing the Way of Salvation.

2. *Iron-grills* (to the left): Christ, the one who went about doing good (Wedding at Cana).— The Tempest.— The ten lepers.— The blind man.— The miracle of the loaves.— The resurrection of Lazarus.

3. *Glass-paintings*: Ten glass-paintings, each expressing a simple message for life. "Pray always, work hard, cooperate with all, help the poor, and you will be happy!"

4. The walls of the Church are decorated with musical instruments, bows and arrows, and agricultural implements, that create a homely atmosphere in the minds of the aboriginals.

IV. The Tower: Memorial to the Ancestors

The tower is an imitation of a *Menhir*, with a *Choudhri-Gumat* (bell-shaped dome), under which a *Khatru*-stone is placed in memory of the ancestors. A flag on top of the tower indicates the sacredness of the place.

Sometimes, instead of the small *Khatru*-stone, stone-slabs are raised in remembrance of important persons, or of people who have died suddenly. According to the adivasis' observation of Nature, plants and trees perish and animals die, but stone is not affected by time. Since they believe in after-life, they want to find a secure place for the wandering soul after death. So, thanks to some rites performed by *Bhagat*, the wandering soul enters into the *Khatru*, or the stone-slab: *hari-jay pache, Khambhaman, Bhagat jiv vale*, i.e. "After death, the *Bhagat* forms the *Jiv*-soul in the memorial stone."

V. The Sanctuary

1. The Altar: Memorial to Christ's Death and Resurrection

a) Right below the tower, but inside the Sanctuary, the main *Khambha* is the Altar, the Memorial of Christ's death and resurrection: Symbolically, the Paschal Lamb and the Rising Sun are carved on the pillars of the Altar.

b) Around the Altar, the leaders of the various villages have laid 27 slabs, representing 27 Christian Communities. They have chosen their own symbols for the stone-slabs, such as: the sun, the moon, the stars, mountains, rivers, deer, birds, bullocks, the cross. . . .

i. The village-slabs are prayer-stones: for the ancestors; for those who now are struggling in life; for those who will rise in Christ.

ii. Besides, as in Ex 24, 4 the stone-slabs remind the people of a Covenant. Thus, on 31st July, 1979, the elders of the 27 villages promised to be faithful to the Lord Jesus, and prayed for his blessings. Each village leader promised to bring his villagers in pilgrimage to the Church once a year, each on a different Sunday.

2. The Dome: God, the Mysterious Power

Many Primitive people believe in the existence of an overwhelming, unique, and supernatural Power, "pervading even the empty spaces of the skies". So, above the big Crucifix of *savan* wood, there is an empty dome, without paintings or designs, a symbol of God's presence "even in the empty spaces of the skies".

3. The Cross: Christ's Sacrifice

Christ's sacrifice is superior to the sacrifices of primitive people. The blood of bulls and goats is useless (cf. Heb 10, 4); but the sacrifices of old make adivasis understand better the saving power of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross.

4. Sides of the Sanctuary: The Tree is Sacred

The forest gives much to the adivasis: shelter, shade, wood, food, and life. So, it is quite natural for them, to attribute divine powers to some trees. They will often place at the foot of a tree small clay-horses of Rajapantha, to implore his protection and to thank him.

Thus, the sides of the Sanctuary are embellished with two trees of *sisam* (black-wood):

a) *Christ, the Tree of Life*, the Cross, with flowers, leaves and fruits carved on the tree (11 feet high);

b) *The Tree of Evil*, with dry leaves and branches, and the Serpent carved on the tree, to the left of the Sanctuary.

5. The Tabernacle

To the left of the Sanctuary is the Tabernacle, like a small ark, based on two deer-shaped pillars. The door leading to the Sacristy has carvings on it: the miracle of the loaves, the Last Supper, and a

group of men holding each others' hands to show that the Eucharist is the Sacrament of Unity.

6. Mary, Mother of the Adivasis

For the Aborigines, the *Mata* or Mother has a special power to protect from epidemics, to cure maladies and to secure bumper crops.

To the right of the Sanctuary, there is a statue of Mary. She is seated on the floor, happy and serene with the Child Jesus in her lap. Her face radiates peace and love. The Child shows deep joy and security in his Mother's lap.

VI. The Risen Christ

High up, at the back of the Church, an iron-grill of the Risen Christ gives to all hope for a New Life. All the children who wander in the Forest of Sin are called back to him. They will for ever be with Christ, the "First Vasavo", the New Adam. The true *Khatru*, the living stone, is Christ (1 Pet 2, 4). No more wandering.

In Brief

The tribals are involved in such intimacy with Nature, that they realize the truth of Life in God. Their deep intuition into the Mysteries of Nature makes them reach the Supernatural. It is a source of joy for the leaders of the local communities to find in their culture the seeds of the Gospel; yet they do realize that certain ways in their life must be healed, ennobled and perfected by Christ, the "First Vasavo".

I. GALDOS, S.J.

African Eucharistic Prayers

With over 50 million Catholics and an impressive annual growth of nearly 5%, with its rich output in Christian art and a wealth of folkloric dance, and with the human and spiritual depth that accrues from a long history of suffering, the African Church is naturally led more and more to express its thanksgiving in African cultural patterns. A recent issue of the *African Ecclesial Review*¹ gives a critical analysis of the "All-Africa Eucharistic Prayer", first published in 1970.² Already that very year a Tanzanian theologian, Fr B. Kaholwe, had offered some criticism of the prayer, while congratulating its author for having attempted "to break new ground in making a proper African liturgical prayer".³ By 1973 a slightly revised version of the prayer was available, and three other anaphorae with a more local orientation were published: one in Kenya, one in Tanzania and one in Uganda. All

1. Eugene, UZUKWU. "The 'All-Africa Eucharistic Prayer' — A Critique", in *AFER* 21/6 (1979), pp. 338-347.

2. *AFER* 12/2 (1970), pp. 144-146.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 367-370.

are based on the traditional prayers of African religions and the basic apperceptions of African culture, but structured in accordance with the central meaning of the Christian anaphora. In 1975 we read of a Zairian Eucharistic prayer,⁴ presented as a development of the second Eucharistic prayer of the Roman Missal — which indeed demands to be filled in with local or temporal variations. This prayer gave a great importance to the theme of the Word of God and its creative function.

While promising to present soon a Nigerian Anaphora, Fr Eugene Uzukwu, in the article mentioned above,⁵ makes a deeper theological analysis and critique of the All-Africa Eucharistic Prayer of 1970, which he considers "a great move towards the right direction". The prayer is quite short — 76 small lines. Uzukwu explains its structure, made up of eight elements, as follows:

1. *Two initial addresses to God*, a "Gathering for Communion", both containing references to the festive and thankful communion meal: "Here is your food ! Here is your drink !"

2. *The Thanksgiving*, in the form of a litany, stressing the gifts of life, freedom and peace with a refrain repeated by the congregation: "We thank you." Uzukwu misses here the emphasis of African religions on God's creative activity in the land, the sea, the moon and the stars.⁶

3. *The Epiclesis*, with a consecratory invocation to the Father asking him to send the Spirit to enliven the gifts, and a prayer for fruitful communion.

4. *The Institution Narrative*, having as the people's response: "It is the Body !", "It is the Blood !"

5. *The Acclamation*: "Hail, Hail, Hail ! Death, Resurrection and Return. May happiness come !"

6. *The Anamnesis* is addressed directly to the Lord, in whom the various aspects of the Paschal Mystery are personified: (Crucifixion, Resurrection and Life, Ascension, "Spirit Medicine of Life").

7. *The Intercessions*, close to the Roman text, but wherein Jesus is said to be "anointed with the Medicine of Life".

8. The following Doxology, addressed to Christ:

And you our prayer,
Prayer of the long-distant past;
You ancient Word, spoken by the Father;
You whose breath is the Spirit;
Prayer of the ancestors,
You are spoken now, Amen !

The bishops of Africa, no less than the priests and the laity, accept the responsibility for "making the liturgy". Thus, in one of the conclusions of the 1976 Triennial Study Conference of AMECEA,⁷

4. *AFER* 17/3 (1975), pp. 218-219.

5. Cf. note 1.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 343.

7. Association of the Members of the Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa — Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

the bishops are mindful of the responsibility they have by reason of their ordination to be "governors, promoters and guardians of the entire liturgical life in the Church committed to them".⁸ They also recall the words of the S. Congregation for Divine Worship that "It is their duty to guide, direct, stimulate and sometimes correct, but always to be shining examples in carrying out the genuine renewal of the Liturgy".⁹ Conscious of this duty and of the need to prepare for it, the Bishops commit themselves "to study, research, consultation, implementation and evaluation" in "the fields of Sacraments and new Eucharistic prayers".¹⁰

We end this note by mentioning two more areas of concern in the fields of liturgical-theological reflection in Africa today. Fr Mpongo Mpoto of Zaire warns of the danger of over-verbalization in liturgy, forgetting thereby the other aspects of liturgical expression:

As expressions of the Church, liturgical celebrations include all cultural elements. They use gestures and mimic as language. Every liturgical celebration is therefore by nature a mimic-dramatic action and includes in its full expression word, gesture, dance, cultural and social elements, all of which form part of human communication... A liturgy made indigenous through full use of human expression is undoubtedly one of the ways at our disposal for an in-depth evangelization of our world.¹¹

More recently L. Magesa of Tanzania has called attention to the Justice dimension of Christian liturgy.¹² The epiclesis of the Spirit in the liturgy is not a call for him to transform only the ritual elements, but the whole face of the earth. In this we take a risk because this call involves us. Hence the basis for ecumenical agreements on the Eucharist in Africa should not be sought so much in common modes of expression, ancient or modern, but in "our concrete history and what the Holy Scriptures are saying to us. Ecumenism in Eastern Africa demands and must be intertwined with prophecy."¹³

The Church at large can ill afford to ignore the new creations of African liturgical life. Beyond the quest for inculturation there is the larger question of sharing insights on our common faith across the cultural and geographical divisions of the *Katholikè*. In this age so marked by inter-continental communication, no local Church can afford to be insular, and no authentic Christian expression should be ignored.

G. GISPert-SAUCH, S.J.

8. Vatican II, *Christus Dominus*, n. 15.

9. "Third Instruction" of September 5th, 1970. Already in 1969 the S. Congregation had stressed the need for "new creation": "In a really renewed liturgy we shall not be content with texts translated from another language. New creations will be needed" (cf. *Notitiae* (44 1969), p. 9). The congregation rightly stresses the need of solid research for this creative task.

10. See the "Conclusions" of the 1976 AMECEA Triennial Study Conference in *AFER* 18/5 (1976), p. 250.

11. "Evangelization et liturgie", in *Telema* 2 (July-October 1976), p. 14.

12. "Eucharist, Unity and Justice in Eastern Africa Today", in *AFER* 21/2 (1969), pp. 90-98.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

Book Reviews

Sacred Scripture

St Paul and his Epistles. A New Introduction. By Hubert RICHARDS. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979. Pp. vii-152. £ 2.50.

This is an ideal book for beginners. The style is simple and direct, the exposition methodical and clear. The introductory chapter, "In Praise of Paul", begins with a well-known quotation from St Chrysostom putting forth several reasons why the writings of St Paul should appeal to all. Each of the next seven chapters introduces one or several letters, with picturesque titles: A Postcard to Philemon; Jitters in Salonika (1-2 Thess); Goings-on in Corinth (1-2 Cor); Thank You, Lydia and Co. (Phil); To the Celts, and a Fair Copy (Gal and Rom); Letters from Jail (Col and Eph); To the Clergy (1-2 Tim and Tit).

Richards succeeds in giving the reader a picture of Paul, the real man, the apostle who bases his exhortations on theological motivations, and who bequeaths to his churches a rich spirituality relevant for all times. The author not only brings the beginner into a first contact with Paul, he also shows him how to read the letters of Paul and discover a deep meaning beneath the surface of the text. This he does more particularly by means of frequent quotations from the letters. Quotations are taken from JB or Alan T. Dale's translation of the New Testament *New World*; occasionally Richards gives his own translation or paraphrases the text. Comments on some of the more important texts prove helpful also. Two examples may be given. Referring to Phil 3, 20f Richards notes: "Christians are not to think of themselves as holding passports for heaven; their passport is *from* heaven, commissioning them to live the life of heaven in this world" (p. 83). Concerning Phil 3, 6-11 he informs the reader that in his own rendering of the passage he has tried to bring out not only the rhythmical pattern of the passage but also its deep meaning. Then he comments: "Jesus, the Man for Others, is presented as the antithesis of Adam, the Man for Himself.

Both created in the image of God, one tried to exploit that prerogative for his own advantage, the other more truly showed whose son he was by his humility. By hiding his glory, he gave himself away, as God does. The extent of his self-emptying must be judged from the fact that he was willing to die as slaves died — as even Paul the Roman citizen could not be forced to die . . ." (p. 78f). Inevitably, at times one may disagree with the author's interpretation, but this does not prevent one from acknowledging the great merit of the work in general.

Galatians and Romans are treated together. This has some advantages as it brings out easily the parallelism arising from an important common theme; however, it has perhaps also its disadvantages in so far as it may eclipse the individual character of each letter, and could create the impression that Rom is but a kind of duplicate, or "a fair copy" of Gal.

Since the book is meant to be an "Introduction", the author wisely abstains from mentioning critical problems which might prove more of a hindrance than a help for beginners. A few footnotes mention passages where scholars detect two or more letters fused into one. I wonder whether such remarks might not more profitably be omitted since they could demand an explanation as to how or why someone would have tampered with the text. This remark applies more particularly to what the author says concerning Rom 9-11 (in the body of the text), viz. that Paul himself has inserted into his letter to the Church at Rome some sort of a sermon or treatise which he had prepared for another occasion (p. 108f).

The sub-title of the book reads "A New Introduction". The Introduction may be called 'new' in so far as it differs from the classical type of 'introductions', mainly by bringing the reader into direct contact with the text itself by means of quotations. Though the method may not be altogether new, the presentation surely is original and succeeds in bringing the reader into personal contact with Paul, the man, and in that manner fosters in him a desire to get familiar with the teaching of the Apostle.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

A Pastoral Guide to the Bible. Edited by George J. DYER. Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1979. Pp. 142. £ 2.75.

The book is a collection of articles by well-known American Catholic scholars — the articles were first published as a special issue of *Chicago Studies*. The opening article by J. J. Collins deals with "Methods and Presuppositions of Biblical Scholarship" which are underlying the next six studies. These are: History as the Revelation of God in the Pentateuch, by C. Stuhlmüller; The Understanding of Revelation in Prophecy and wisdom, by R. E. Murphy; Eschatology, by G. W. MacRae; Jesus the Lord, by J. A. Fitzmyer; Church and Ministry, by D. J. Harrington; The Bible and the Preacher, by W. Carroll.

The editor tells us that the purpose of the book is "to give an overview of contemporary scholarship in these several fields and to encourage us to further study of our own. The text is in question and answer format for two reasons. We hope that the questions will serve as a ready reference to the material under discussion. We also felt that they would allow the authors to address with a high degree of precision many of the problems with obvious pastoral implications." Opinions may differ as to the expediency of the question-and-answer method. There seems to be something artificial in the presentation, almost turning the various sections into so many encyclopaedia-entries. However, this impression may be no more than a matter of taste. In any case the reader will find here some excellent expositions about topics which are of real interest today.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

Mary in the New Testament. A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars. Edited by Raymond E. BROWN, Karl P. DONFRIED, Joseph A. FITZMYER and John REUMANN. Bangalore, Theological Publications in India, 1979. Pp. xii-323. Rs 15.

Theological Publications in India must be thanked for bringing out at a very modest cost this Indian edition of an important book on Mary in the New Testament by an ecumenical team of biblical scholars. We refer our readers to the review of the original edition published recently in our columns (cf VIDYAJYOTI, March 1980, pp. 145-146). The book will not only be useful in seminaries but will help to foster ecumenical understanding in a field where it has often been lacking.

J.D.

Liberation Christology

Jesus Christ Liberator. A Critical Christology for our Time. By Leonardo BOFF, O.F.M. Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1978. Pp. 323. \$ 9.95.

The original Brazilian edition of this book appeared in 1972. This is worth noting because Latin American Liberation Theology has been reproached in its early stage for having a weak Christological basis. This is in fact one of the early works of Christology produced by that theological current; many have followed thereafter. For the English edition now under review Boff has added a long Epilogue (pp. 264-295) in which his stand on the function and scope of liberation theology becomes much more explicit, especially with regard to socio-analytical thought. The Preface to this edition explains that the political circumstances obtaining at the time of the original publication prevented full expression of his thought, which he now complements, showing even more clearly the liberation dimension of the life, message and activity of the historical Jesus.

Boff does not think that Liberation Christology needs to be in complete rupture with the past. Admitting that his study depends heavily on foreign theological literature of European origin, he sees the Latin American dimension of his work as consisting in the context in which the N.T. itself and the most recent Christological thinking of Europe are re-read and interpreted (p. 43). On the one hand, Boff lays — rightly — heavy stress on the humanity of Jesus: his originality, his good sense, his creative imagination, his championing of liberty and his mission to overcome all human alienation; on the other hand, he does not fight shy of the divinity of Jesus, of a fair and objective discussion of the merits and shortcomings of the Chalcedonian formulation, and of a theological reflection on the mystery of the "hypostatic union" (in which he depends much on K. Rahner). While he insists that a return to the Jesus of history is imperative if Christianity is to be made relevant to the Latin American context, his "Jesusology" is not set in opposition to a "Christology". The Christ of faith is the Jesus of history transformed by being raised by the Father. Following sound contemporary exegesis, Boff traces the process from the implicit Christology of Jesus' own awareness and testimony to the explicit Christology issuing from the Church's faith-interpretation, in apostolic times and thereafter. The cons-

ciousness of Jesus was essentially filial; the Church explicited the mystery of his person in terms of 'Son of God'. Boff inclines, with other Christologists today, to attribute to the apostolic Church the use of all Christological titles about Jesus, 'Son of Man' included; but this does not undermine their validity. What it does show is that the faith-interpretation of the apostolic Church — and a fortiori of the later tradition — is conditioned by thought-patterns of a particular culture. In new situations the Church has the duty to express the same faith in a fresh way. Boff attempts to do this in the context of the Latin American situation, insisting that the knowledge of Christ is no knowledge unless it is applied to life. At the same time he clearly recognises that a preoccupation with liberation does not form the only light in which Jesus can be seen; his discussion is valuable also for those whose approach to Christ is determined by other factors.

The book deserves a large audience within and beyond the confines of liberation theology; it will also serve as a good basis for Christological reflection and discussion at various levels, professional and otherwise.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Jesus before Christianity. By Albert NOLAN. Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1978. Pp. 156. \$ 5.95.

One common trait of all Liberation Christology is its insistence on the historical Jesus as immediate source of relevance to present world situations, especially in the Third World. The author of this volume, a Dominican in South Africa, notes that there is no point trying to make Jesus relevant; what needs to be done is to show that he is so eminently fitted because the world in which he lived was besieged with the same problems as is ours today. Jesus' response to these problems paves the way for and inspires the Christian response. A first chapter exposes briefly the present world scene, leaving it to the reader to discover for himself, as he reads on, how supremely relevant to it is the Jesus of history.

What follows is a description of the human 'project' of Jesus, vividly situated in the circumstances, social, economic, political and religious of his time. What was Jesus' intention and what did he do? How did he react to persons and groups, to situations and ideologies? Nolan stresses Jesus' compassion, his healing ministry and his forgiveness. He shows that the originality of Jesus consists in his understanding of the Kingdom of God

which he preaches. This sets him in opposition to all accepted standards: against money, prestige and power. He upsets all values with his message of solidarity and of liberation from all oppressive structures. Hence the confrontation with the religious and political authorities which brought him to a violent death.

The portrait is unmistakably clear and convincing, as it shows the deep involvement of Jesus in the real problems of his time. The man portrayed here is a far cry from many later portraits, and the author's lucid but calm style helps to enhance it. Admittedly some guesswork enters here and there into the reconstruction ("probably", "perhaps", "must have been"), though Nolan is careful to note it and uses the tools of modern exegesis to get at the historical Jesus. One may, however, ask whether he is not overconfident in the efforts at finding the Jesus of history, divested of the Christ of faith, and whether in the process he does not sometimes underestimate the former. The New Testament surely witnesses to both, but hardly allows to draw a clear line between the two. Nolan's interpretation of Jesus' claim to authority, to give one example, may appear reductionist; he thinks it futile to speculate on the consciousness of Jesus. He notes that his book "can be read and is designed to be read without faith" (p. 1), in the sense that faith is not its starting point though it may, hopefully, be its conclusion. The last chapter of the book leads in fact to the recognition of the divinity of Jesus, through his resurrection. The resurrection, however, is treated very succinctly, as already belonging beyond history. And the question remains whether the light of faith originating from it does not allow us, or force us at times, to throw added light on the historical Jesus himself.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Christ: Liberation of the World Today. By Charles MASSABKI. New York, Alba House, 1978. Pp. xi-312. \$ 6.95.

This book belongs to a quite different context from those just reviewed and, in spite of the title, is not a Liberation Christology in the sense which the expression has taken in recent years in the context of the third world, Latin America especially. The author is a Benedictine monk of the Abbey of Sainte-Marie in Paris. The book is not an enquiry into the Jesus of history, his life and action, his attitudes and conflicts; it places itself directly within the faith-vision of a far-evolved ecclesial tradition. Nor is it a

dogmatic treatment of the salvific event that took place in Jesus Christ (the 'objective' redemption of classical terminology), but rather of its application to men through subjective redemption. This point of view is of course legitimate in itself; yet the method will appear to many too aprioristic and deductive. One misses here the link between the event and its faith-interpretation.

This is not to say that the author is not concerned with relevance to our present world. In fact his study opens with an analysis of the modern world — its progress and regression, its hunger for God — much inspired by the Vatican II Pastoral Constitution, *Gaudium et Spes*. From there he proceeds to show that Jesus Christ means liberation for this world: liberation from spiritual death; liberation of the human person, of intelligence and liberty, of love; liberation from concupiscence, from physical death and suffering; finally, liberation of temporal values and of earthly tasks. The scope of the book is broad enough; yet it remains unconvincing in method and disappointing in content. The author seems little in touch with present theological trends (many references to French authors are somewhat outdated); and less, perhaps, with the way in which the modern world experiences its need for liberation.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Meditations on Jesus

Jesus of Nazareth. By JOSÉ COMBLIN. Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1979. Pp. 167. \$ 4.95.

Sent from the Father. By JOSÉ COMBLIN. Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books/ Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1979. Pp. 115. \$ 3.95. £ 2.70.

The blurb of both little volumes quotes Dom Helder Camara saying: "José Comblin is a living example of the committed theologian... (He) has made a decisive contribution to Northeast Brazil, to Latin America, and to the world." Expelled from Brazil in 1972, he is now teaching at the Catholic University of Chile. The two books on Jesus are presented in their subtitles as "Meditations": the first as "Meditations on his Humanity", the second as "Meditations on the Fourth Gospel". Both witness to the

preoccupations of Latin American Liberation Theology of which Comblin has been an early protagonist. Both are searching in the Gospel for the human side and personality of the pre-Easter Jesus. Comblin notes that the human personality of Jesus appears in a different light in the Synoptics and in John's Gospel; hence the two volumes. He nevertheless believes that John's Gospel too reveals much of Jesus' pre-Easter condition. Above all he thinks that, as the faith of the disciples had to ascend from Jesus' humanity during the years of their companionship with him, to his divine condition through their Easter experience, so too it is important that our faith today should dwell first on Jesus the man lest we should have a distorted view of his divinity. The first volume shows Jesus the man, his freedom, his message of brotherhood, his relation to the Father, his hope and his mission. The second concentrates on the mission from the Father. Both are simple and accessible to all, though based on sound exegetical study; both give a vivid picture of Jesus, and of the demands he makes on those who would continue his mission.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Jesus the Stranger. By Joseph G. DONDERS. Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1979. Pp. 290. £ 3.95.

This book by a Dutch theologian, professor at the University of Nairobi, claims not to be a book of meditations written by the author, though a lot of meditation has gone into its making. More interestingly, it is a book of sermons, and of sermons prepared with and by the congregation of the University Chapel. The sermons contain many valuable insights into the life and teaching of Jesus, as they apply to life-situations today, especially in the context of the Third World, and specifically of Africa. The point of the title is that Jesus often remains a stranger to us, because we fail to recognize his true humanity in his and in our own life. The message of the sermons is always fresh and vital. Uncomfortable truths are told, which should stir us out of our complacency. It may not be possible to preach these sermons as they are, for their style and layout are unusual and inimitable; but their substance will greatly help to relate preaching to life.

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In This Issue

"Small is beautiful", if anywhere, should apply to man himself. We celebrated last year the International Year of the Child, but the message should not be lost once the celebration is over. Nor is the message only about and for children, but for all of us. In an article entitled "Man the Born Child", Fr A. P. DOMINIC renews for us the message of childhood. He shows that there is and remains a child in every man; that this is not only a human need but also one inspired in us by God himself so that we might be his children. Jesus' attitude towards the little ones reveals God's own regard for them, for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven. Paradoxically, man's task is to become a child; but this is the hardest lesson for him to learn.

In the second instalment of his article on "Formation of Religious and Service of the Poor", Fr J. VELAMKUNNEL offers suggestions for a new orientation of religious training in the context of North India. How can we help young religious men and women to integrate themselves among the masses, to cultivate a spiritual life that will support their apostolate among them? Real and prolonged exposure to people and their problems is required to counteract the enclosed atmosphere of formation houses. Experience should be acquired with adults as against the prevalent orientation to work among children. Above all, a spiritual life must be fostered which will find its nourishment in real life-situations and in commitment to the people.

Many tensions arising in the ministry have their source in what Fr J. CURRIE calls the conflict of two mentalities. He describes them as the Closed Mentality and the Open Mentality and shows that their encounter, if it manifests a spiritual crisis, is primarily a pastoral problem. The solution ahead does not lie in deciding which is right and which is wrong, but in "Searching for the Mind of Christ" in an attitude of faith that is able to embrace and yet to transcend both.

Fr G. GONSALVES and Sr Gladys D'SOUZA contrast "The Word of God and the Word of the Ads". They show how radically opposed to the Gospel values is the message that continuously comes to us from the advertisement business of our consumerist society. Unconsciously we are being subjected to great pressure from a value system that generates an unjust social order. How do we react?

Man the Born Child

A. Paul DOMINIC, S.J.

Small is Beautiful

AN economist who has studied economics as if people mattered, has made a profoundly Christian statement: "I have no doubt that it is possible to give a new direction to technological development, a direction that will lead it back to the real needs of man, and that also means: to the actual size of man. Man is small, and therefore, small is beautiful."¹ These words may well provide inspiration for a much needed emphasis on the small stature of man in present-day Christian thought. God is essentially holy, i.e., utterly transcendent and completely apart from anything sinful or merely finite; whereas man is weak physically and morally, which is expressed by the word flesh (*bāṣār*) in the Bible. Faced with God, man cannot but feel small:

Yahweh, what is man, that you should notice him ?
A human being, that you should think about him ?" (Ps 144: 3).

Aware of God's knowledge, man is bound to abase himself like Job confessing:

I have been holding forth on matters I cannot understand,
on marvels beyond me and my knowledge (Jb 42: 3b).

Man is so small in every way that the smallest things in life are outside his control (cf. Lk 12: 25-26). That is human experience. And yet man's smallness is beautiful by the very fact that it is part of his nature. In the references above, man discovers that his smallness is crowned with divine splendour (cf. Ps 8: 5), favour (cf. Jb 42: 7-9) and providence (cf. Lk 12: 27-29). Even the most terrifying aspect of the smallness of man that is seen in death opens the way to greatness through hope. That is how a psalmist prays faced with the shortness of his life:

Tell me, Yahweh, when my end will be,
how many days are allowed me,
show me how frail I am.

.....
So tell me, Lord, what can I expect ?
My hope is in you (Ps 39: 4, 7).

1. E. F. SCHUMACHER, *Small Is Beautiful* (New Delhi, 1978), p. 148.

The most beautiful aspect of the smallness of man is his childlike trust in God:

Yahweh, my heart has no lofty ambitions,
My eyes do not look too high.

.....
Enough for me to keep my soul tranquil and quiet,
like a child in its mother's arms,
as content as a child that has been weaned (Ps 131: 1-2).

Smallness is characteristic of man in different ways all through the seven ages of life, from the age of the child onwards, but the loveliness of the smallness of man shows itself particularly in the child.

The Child in Man

Man is not only born a child but remains a child more or less all through his life. Though old age in its weakness is identified as second childhood, all ages of man bear some marks of childhood. All grown-ups were once children, and continue to be children in some way or other as they carry within them the vestiges of their childhood. "The child is father of the man", in the words of W. Wordsworth,² and so, we may add, the child survives in the man. There is an element of the child in all men. R. Tagore's intuition was perfect: "Man is a born child."³ What the poets said in a telling, though elusive, manner, common people have said in their own way without knowing it; and psychiatrists have now given a structure to it in Transactional Analysis. According to their view, man has different ego-states, i.e., systems of feelings expressed in corresponding behavioural patterns; and these ego-states are three in number, called Parent, Adult and Child according as one acts like one's own parents, or like an autonomous person able to decide on objective data, or like the little boy or girl one has been. Of these three psychological realities, the Parent is the weakest, the Adult is less easily dispossessed, and the Child seems to be almost unyielding. Surely man is much more of a Child than he imagines. The proper function of the Child is regulation of the function of the Parent and the Adult, so that it may enjoy itself most. That is why "the Child is in many ways the most valuable part of the personality, and can contribute to the individual's life exactly what an actual child can contribute to family life: charm, pleasure, and creativity."⁴

2. W. WORDSWORTH, *My Heart Leaps Up*.

3. R. TAGORE, *Stray Birds*, n. 25.

4. E. BERNE, *Games People Play* (London, 1968), pp. 25-26; cf. also id., *Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy* (New York, 1975), p. 47.

Human Need to be Children

There is therefore a real human need for all to be children. The expression of the need will vary among people. It need not be the same as that of the little girl of eight who said frankly: "I'd like to be little again, because then I wouldn't have to go to school." But the need to be children is basically among all. J. Vanier was not being particularly romantic when he said in an address to a group of major superiors of religious: "... all of us in our heart of hearts are little children, though we may cover it up. We are little children, and we are deeply in need of love, each one of us."⁵ We can understand men who, wearied with what they see around the world, feel the need to play once more like children rolling in the lawns or romping in the dunes. The success story of Carot, the famous landscape painter, is revealing: beyond wanting to be a child, he prayed daily that God might make him see nature with the eyes of a child. Is it possible that men do not know better than they did as children and that they merely know more? The mysterious superiority of children over elders is the subtle theme of the children's story, *The Little Prince*, that can be appreciated fully only by the elders: Who would dispute with the Little Prince, as he says in a voice that rings true: "Only the children know what they are looking for"?⁶ One would be surprised to find similar thoughts in the writings of a mystic like Julian of Norwich. "I understand no status in this life", she writes, "to be more noble than childhood with its feebleness, and its failure of strength and intellect."⁷

Divine Need to be Children

The factual experience of the need of men to be children is not just nostalgia, much less sheer regression. It is part of our better feelings. If men have known this intuitively and expressed this inarticulately, Jesus has confirmed this knowingly and explained this plainly enough. He has revealed that the spontaneous urge of human nature in this instance is a genuine expression of the gracious intention of God in our regard. He has made known to men that their human need to be children is also a divine need. In other words God has imprinted this need in men, intending this to serve in their relationship to God. Before Jesus taught this, he lived it. When God became man, he was born a child. Contemplating the mystery at Bethlehem, one may make bold to think that there was a divine need for God to become not just a man, but a child. Incarnation

5. J. VANIER, *Followers of Jesus* (Bombay, 1975), pp. 63-64.

6. A DE SAINT-EXUPERY, *The Little Prince* (London, 1974), p. 73.

7. JULIAN OF NORWICH, *Revelations of Divine Love* (New York, 1977), p. 199.

strictly needs no human birth, but only human flesh. The Word however became flesh with the flesh of a child; and the divine child grew to maturity in the manner of every child. What is the specific mystery of the childhood of Jesus? There is a specific mystery of his death on the cross that is part of the total mystery of incarnation. The hymn in Philippians delineates the mystery in all its poignancy: having divested himself of the status of glory that belongs to him, he becomes as all men are, only to reach the lowest depth of humiliation by death on a cross (cf. Ph 2:7-8). The mystery of the death of the cross is the mystery of the depth of *kenosis*. Incarnation, however, is not only *kenosis* but *epiphany*. As Jesus was made visible in the flesh of the new born baby (cf. 1 Tm 3:16), the angels proclaimed the glory of God on the earth (cf. Lk 2:9-14). In the face of the child shone "the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:14b). A human child now bore "the image of the unseen God" (Col 1:15), and revealed the marvellous grace of God (cf. Tt 2:11) as he grew up (cf. Lk 2:40). Surely the medium of the child became itself the message of God. This, perhaps, is the specific mystery of the childhood of Jesus. If God became a child, the state of childhood must be godly and in all likelihood must open a pathway to God.

Jesus and the Children

This certainly was the mind of Jesus. He taught this in no uncertain terms to his disciples, on occasion. One occasion is reported by all the three Synoptics. Mark writes in his lively style:

People were bringing little children to him, for him to touch them. The disciples turned them away, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them: "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." Then he put his arms round them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing (Mk 10:13-16).

This most lovely incident brings home to us a precious revelation through the combined word and deed of Jesus. Whatever might be the reason for the disciples' action, whether it was their concern for Jesus on the way to the Passion or their idea of Jesus as someone more than a scribe, the sharp reaction of Jesus — *aganakteo* (to be indignant) is used only here — indicated that something of fundamental importance was at stake. He wanted his disciples to know the truth about the kingdom of God: it belongs to children and to such as the children. These words are as astonishing as refreshing, disclosing thereby his divinity as his words, better than his works, do! While

the Jewish tradition considers the children below the age of the Law, Jesus looks upon them as the first inheritors of the kingdom of God, because only they can call, or rather can be taught to call, God 'Abba' with a spontaneous feeling of security in his immense love. He promises admittance into the heavenly kingdom to grown-ups only if they are like children. Lest any doubt should linger in the minds of his disciples, he holds out a threat of exclusion from the kingdom for those who do not behave like children in welcoming it. Finally he confirms his word of revelation about children by his action: he warmly embraces them and blesses them.

A word must be said in passing about what Jesus' fondness for children should mean for moderns. Today the rich world needs to learn how to welcome children and love them. It is not a question of having more children, but of an attitude worthy of them. The U.N.O. has specified, in its charter of Rights of the Child, that children have a right to affection, love and understanding. But an enormous number of children are isolated, oppressed and often ill-treated all over the world, and not only in the under-developed countries. In the developed countries well-fed children experience the trauma of rejection, because their parents consider them more of a burden than a joy. An English mother has said that children under the age of three are the targets of physical abuse of parents, angry with each other because of the marital accident of a baby! In America every year a million children lose the love of one or the other parent because of divorce. In India child-labour desecrates the hearts of millions of children so employed. In Africa and parts of West Asia female children suffer from the painful practice of ritual genital mutilation.⁸ Has the International Year of the Child given children entrance into our heart, as we see Jesus himself drawing children to himself?

Jesus speaks of the right of children's entry into heaven on another occasion. His disciples ask him, perhaps after a dispute among themselves (cf. Mk 9:33, 34): "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus responds by calling a little child and setting him in front of them, as he makes himself clear: "I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. And so, the one who makes himself as little as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 18:3-4). The first part of the statement, which is closely related to Mk 10:15, seen already, does not answer the

8. *Himmat*, September 7, 1979, p. 17; *German News*, August 30, 1979, pp. 8-9; *The Hindu*, November 2, 1979, p. 7; *Indian Express*, November 3, 1979, p. 8.

question who is the greatest; this answer is given in the second part. But it points to what is even more fundamental: becoming like children is the very condition of admission into heaven. This incidentally implies the children's right of entering heaven, which is in fact the basis of the whole argument in Jesus' answer. All this Jesus meant to say in one simple revealing gesture when he held out a child before his disciples in answer to their question. He was answering them by way of parable:⁹ the greatest in the kingdom of heaven is like this child. When he found them bewildered by his wordless parable, as they were always slow to understand parables (cf. Mk 4:13-14), only then perhaps he spoke out his thought which was only to confound them all the more. Surely it was too simple to be grasped and too truthful to be believed! But "God waits for man to regain his childhood in wisdom".¹⁰

Jesus has made the child teach us a fundamental revelation. The child is a compelling and untiring teacher. It teaches persuasively but unobtrusively by the charm of its being itself. For instance, the story is told of how a chance remark innocently made aloud by a child in the course of a routine traditional devotion led to its meaningful renewal. No doubt the child has an uncanny way of getting to the core of things. The child is always and everywhere a living parable anyone can understand, if one has eyes to see and ears to hear! The cartoonist Schulz has created his *Peanuts* on this principle.¹¹ All those who have cared to love children in such a way that they cared to return their love, know this. Children each elude something without meaning to teach anything. However, they teach only as they are taught. In this context it is enlightening to know that the Rights of the Child recognised by the U.N.O. include opportunities and facilities for the growth of the child not only physically and mentally, but also morally and spiritually. Modern missionaries have known success in reaching out to the illiterate and de-christianised parents precisely through the education and catechesis of their children.

Children Belong to the Kingdom of God

What Jesus has said about children in relation to the kingdom of heaven reveals that they belong to the sphere of the divine in a unique manner. They are the ones, perhaps, who are most alive and in whom therefore God displays his glory. God is in the children

9. Compare the parable spoken in answer to the question: "Who is my neighbour?" (Lk 10: 29).

10. R. TAGORE, op. cit., n. 300.

11. Cf. R. L. SHORT, *The Parables of Peanuts* (New York, 1974), p. 18.

who play merrily 'blind-man's buff and proudly ducks and drakes. Wherever they are, whether in the house or kindergarten or playground, there is, what someone has called, God's music. Parents caring to look deeply into the eyes of the children will discover one day or other the mystery of the infinite and the beyond. An Indian photo-journalist, T. S. Satyan by name, who has held an exhibition of his photographs of Indian children in U.N.O. headquarters, has said that Indians view children as divine incarnations. To turn from children with a frown is certainly not to know what heaven, the kingdom of God, is. Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God implies and includes the privileged status of children there, as their angels in heaven are continually in the presence of God (cf. Mt 18:10b).

Being so very close to God, children have the virtue of reverence innate in them. Their reverence manifests itself in their humble eagerness to be taught by God. The very fact of their coming to Jesus is the proof that they are drawn by his Father (cf. Jn 6:44). So Jesus accepts them in the name of his Father and proclaims his gospel to them. Once Jesus rejoiced over this privilege of the children as he addressed his Father: "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do" (Mt 11:25-26). Simple children surely enjoy the gift of discovering the surrounding mystery: "discovering . . . first, things; then the wonder of things; then the wonder of words for things and words for people; and then the symbols that express that which cannot be expressed."¹² That is why one psalmist could exclaim to God:

Above the heavens is your majesty chanted
by the mouths of children, babes in arms (Ps 8:1-2).

In a surprising and sublime way this actually came true in the life of Jesus at least twice: first, when the babies of Bethlehem confessed his name by shedding their blood at the hands of Herod (cf. Mt 2:16), and second, when the children of Jerusalem hailed him as the Messiah before his passover (cf. Mt 21:15-16).

In this context an answer suggests itself to the question of why Jesus speaks of the mystery of the kingdom of heaven in parables. The grown-ups fail to grasp the meaning of the parables. They will listen and listen again, but not understand and will see and see again, but not perceive, as Jesus himself says recalling the words of Isaiah (cf. Mt 13:13-15). But the children will understand the

12. E. FARRELL, *Prayer Is a Hunger* (London, 1978), p. 72.

parables ! As children alone are disposed to receive the knowledge of the kingdom, Jesus speaks to them in a way they can understand by means of fascinating illustrations. Someone has said charmingly: "The good news is addressed to the imagination."¹³ If so, it is children who can receive the gospel, as they do their thinking with imagination. By the power of imagination they harmonize the invisible and visible world and visualize them in their unity. So they appreciate and grasp the imaginative parables that express the heavenly reality in vivid images.

Children Show the Way

Jesus not only speaks of the children as belonging to the kingdom of God, but also in a way identifies them with it. Because children belong to the kingdom Jesus welcomes them to his presence: "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them" (Mk 10:14). Going beyond this, he even identifies them with himself and his Father and therefore with the kingdom itself: "Anyone who welcomes one of the little children in my name, welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me" (Mk 9:37). So children stand for the kingdom of God. The Lucan passage dealing with Jesus and the children (Lk 18:15-17), parallel to Mk 10:13-16 but placed in a different context, may serve as a forceful additional answer to the question when the kingdom is to come, asked in the previous chapter (cf. Lk 17:20).¹⁴ The kingdom is not going to dawn with observable signs, for it is already there and it is none other than the world of the little children. Surely with the children we can go as high as the kingdom of heaven and feel nearer to God's intentions. But understanding the human world of children is itself not easy. It is a closed world for most grown-ups as *The Little Prince* so clearly brings out. So how much hidden from us must the heavenly world of children be ! One aspect however is apparent enough: since the kingdom of heaven has been revealed to us by Jesus as the world of children, smallness and littleness must be heavenly characteristics ! No wonder then that God is not adult enough for our world come of age ! That is why we have the temptation "to shorten his ways, to force his hand, to direct, measure and regulate his view, and even his love, and to do violence to God".¹⁵ But if little children in their spontaneity act differently, what are their characteristic ways of acting ? Since Jesus has warned adults that they would find themselves out of the kingdom

13. J. CARROLL, *Prayer from Where We Are* (Ohio, 1970), p. 91.

14. Cf. *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 44:128.

15. L. BOROS, *God Is With Us* (London 1973), p. 147.

of heaven unless they become like little children; how are we to enter the world of children? How does their smallness become for us too an active sign of belonging to God? How can their natural dependence enter into our own relationship to God? What are their other distinctive and specific qualities that can shape our life in God? What is it that makes us children before God?

The answers to these questions should be in a way obvious. At any rate Jesus does not expatiate on how to become children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. In his conversation with Nicodemus he makes this his teaching even more obscure: "unless a man is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn 3:3). When the nocturnal disciple expresses twice his puzzlement over the saying, Jesus wonders that Nicodemus should fail to understand his teaching. He then confronts him: "If you do not believe me when I speak about things in this world, how are you going to believe me when I speak to you about heavenly things?" (Jn 3:12). In whatever way this may be understood, it seems to be beyond doubt that Jesus considers his condition for entry into the kingdom simple enough to understand. In the other instance, his teaching on our need to become children was in a way made clearer by his demonstration of a child. Those who care to listen to him, understand him literally and repeat him verbatim. They are not all cloistered nuns like St Thérèse of Lisieux. Men like R. Voillaume and J. Vanier, very much involved in life, have echoed the words of Jesus on becoming like children with a persuasion that is astonishing; and people have been drawn by them as can be seen by the success of a simple author like C. Carretto.¹⁶ So we too shall do well to look at children and learn from them how we can become like them and make our way to the kingdom of God.

Becoming Children Ourselves

Children are small in every way. Their smallness must become in some way or other a dimension of us, if we are to become little children in accordance with the declared will of Jesus. Because of their smallness, children are in a complete state of dependence on others. Men outgrow this state of childhood but not completely; for mutual inter-dependence written into the law of their nature nurtures human existence (Gn 2:18). Men need to accept this life-long dependence, like children, graciously and gratefully. There is another dimension of dependence which is the same for all; and that is the

16. Cf. R. VOILLAUME, *Brothers of Men* (London and New Jersey, 1973) pp. 100-105; J. VANIER, *op. cit.*, p. 14; C. CARRETTO, *In Search of the Beyond* (Bombay, 1975), pp. 11-14, 74-79.

fundamental dependence on God. Children's dependence on guardians is nothing compared to everyone's existential dependence on God. This universal dependence on God shows especially in the frailty of human life:

Were he to recall his breath
to draw his breathing back into himself,
things of flesh would perish all together,
and man would return to dust (Jb 34: 14-15).

But he takes no pleasure in the extinction of the living; for his intention in creation is that all may continue to live (cf. Ws 1:13-14). He is indeed our father in whom we exist (cf. Ac 17:28) and by whom we subsist (cf. Dt 32:6). As for frail children in relation to their father, our dependence on God must become a source of thrill and a matter of pride. A psalmist says this knowingly:

As tenderly as a father treats his children,
so Yahweh treats those who fear him;
he knows what we are made of,
he remembers we are dust (Ps 103: 13-14).

Our genuine littleness therefore is our forte. There is every reason to say that we need not make ourselves little but only recognize ourselves so, for we are indeed existentially little. It is therefore a matter of becoming what we are. This, however, involves the realization that little as we are, we are all children of God (cf. Ac 17:28); for, with his breath as he creates new life, he also renews life (cf. Ps 104:30). Such an insight was the inspiration of the psalmist to pray:

If my father and mother desert me,
Yahweh will care for me still (Ps 27: 10).

What has been said in the previous paragraph may be expressed in other words: all human existence, for all its frailty, or perhaps more correctly in its very frailty, testifies to the love of the Creator. If any further proof is needed, we need only look at the child; for "every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man",¹⁷ as R. Tagore has said. The conviction of this fundamental truth of our existence establishes the properly essential relationship with God. It generates prime trustfulness that consists in nothing less than the certainty of being absolutely and effectively loved by God. This 'trusting to love' is the characteristic simplicity of the child.¹⁸ Jesus instils this spirit in his disciples in a natural way. He asks them to cast away all cares, as their Father in heaven himself cares about them. Man's anxiety about food and clothing

17. R. TAGORE, op. cit., n. 77.

18. Cf. J. PIEPER, *About Love* (Chicago, 1974), p. 31.

cannot overwhelm his life, as life, coming from God, means for more than mere sustenance and vesture. Further, man cannot satisfy even his minimum wants with all his worrying. On the contrary, the birds of the air that do not labour are fed by God. The flowers of the field that do not work are clothed by God. Man surely is worth much more than the birds and the flowers; and therefore how much more will God look after him ! (cf. Lk 12: 22-30). It is worth observing that in the passage referred to, God is Father only for people and not for other living things. The whole argument leads us to the experience of 'trusting to love', the love of the Father who knows our needs, and who provides for nature itself. Jesus not only teaches his disciples this spirit, but trains them in it. Once he sends them out to heal and preach without provision; and they learn for themselves that God does not leave them in want (cf. Lk 22: 35). Jesus wants the simplicity of 'trusting to love' to be the source of any particular request made to God. Starting from the earthly father's love which seeks to fulfil the exact wishes of children, Jesus draws the conclusion: "If you, then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him !" (Mt 7:11). Therefore by the trust we repose in God, we become like little children, in fact his very children.

Growth too is a characteristic of children. It is a sign of their living. We are to become children in this way too. "Man is a born child, his power is in the power of growth."¹⁹ The power of growth is innate in man. That is why he keeps growing mentally even after he stops growing physically. *Semper idem* cannot possibly be the ideal motto of man, as he never reaches the point of no further growth. This is most especially true in the spiritual life which begins, and remains ever on the ascent and never ends. By the gift of faith culminating in baptism we are incorporated into Christ (*eis Christon*) and we are born to a new life in Christ (*en Christo*) (cf. Rm 6: 4), which is so new that it can be called a new creation (cf. 2 Co 5:17). In the process, we grow so much in union with him (*sumphutot*), like the branch grafted on a tree (cf. Rm 6: 5), that we now belong to him (cf. 2 Co 10: 7), living not with our own life but with the life of Christ in us (cf. Ga 2: 20). This new life of Christ in us is sustained by the communion with the body and blood of Christ (cf. 1 Co 10:16), until, knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, we are filled with the utter fullness of God (cf. Ep 3:19). This will happen ultimately when

19. R. TAGORE, op. cit., n. 25.

Christ "will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body" (Ph 3:21). In this sense we are now ever emerging to the maturity of our unique real self in Christ that will become manifest in heaven, so that here on earth we remain growing children wholly turned to the future that is final and glorious.

An essential aspect of growth is openness, which is so very charming in children. Jesus draws our attention to this when he speaks of welcoming the kingdom of God like a little child (cf. Mk 10:15). This spirit of openness is the meaning of the paradoxical saying of Jesus: "Anyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough" (Mt 13:12). Its occurrence at the end of the parable of the talents (cf. Mt 25:14-30), as also of the pounds (cf. Lk 19:11-26), is not so self-explanatory (cf. Lk 19:25). Luke perhaps makes it most clear by his introductory line: "So take care how you hear" (Lk 8:18). Those who receive the gift of God with an open heart come closer to God and in a way become worthy of him. All those who accept the Word, the foremost gift of God, receive also the power to become children of God, according to the testimony of St John (cf. Jn 1:12). Becoming children, they are "hungry for nothing but milk" (1 P 2:2): that is to say, they long to progress in the knowledge of the truth of Christ. They progress to the extent of their docility in relationship to God. They exercise this spirit concretely like the boy Jesus (cf. Lk 2:46), when they are eager to question, and at the same time ready to listen to, those who hold the place of God. Sometimes, by the very spontaneity and intuition of their questions they get to the heart of the matter and astound the elders. Surely "Wisdom has been proved right by all her children" (Lk 7:35), as Jesus himself says. Among them St Thérèse of the Child Jesus has pride of place. With the heart of the child she grasped in a surprising way how divine justice squares with divine love: "It is because he is just he is compassionate, and merciful, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy."²⁰ Being a child to the core, she could penetrate the mystery of childhood in the teaching of Jesus, which is something that theologians have yet to discover in its depth. She formulated her "Little Way" from her simple, childlike reading of the scriptures and showed us how we can be taught by God (cf. Jn 6:45).

When Jesus speaks about our becoming little children, obviously he has in mind our becoming childlike with all the admirable traits of children. However he has no mind to idealize children. He

20. Cf. V. JOHNSON, *Spiritual Childhood* (London, 1977), p. 86.

knows full well their seamy side too. There is an instance of his referring to their petulance (cf. Mt 11:16-19). There is another of his speaking about their falling astray (cf. Mt 18: 6). Jesus certainly does not wish us to imitate children in their unseemly ways. But we carry the marks of moral vulnerability of children. How then can we become worthy children of the heavenly Father? On our own we can do nothing. But God has given us, his children, the good hope that he will grant us repentance (cf. Ws 12:19b). In the story of the prodigal father (cf. Lk 15:11-32), the wayward son becomes the father's child again when, on receiving the forgiving love of his father, he experiences genuine and complete repentance. It is said of the favourite daughter of St Thomas More, that she used to commit faults precisely to enjoy the love with which her father would forgive her. This opens the door to the real mystery: the mystery of the fatherhood of God. Even on the human level, the relation of childhood results from that of fatherhood. A fortiori, the mystery of our being children of God originates from the real mystery of the fatherhood of God. So when we fail God, we continue to be, or rather become once again, his children not so much by asking his pardon, but by receiving it. This spirit was part of the "Little Way" of St Thérèse.²¹ The same spirit inspired a psalmist to pray thus in the name of sinful people:

Where is your ardour, your might,
the yearning of your inmost heart?
Do not let your compassion go unmoved,
for you are our Father.
For Abraham does not own us
and Israel does not acknowledge us;
you, Yahweh, yourself are our Father,
Our Redeemer is your ancient name (Is 63: 15-16).

Since the Fatherhood of God is the primary mystery which works in us and recreates us as children of God, we necessarily go through the process of a certain reversal of values. Jesus stands for a new world ever "destined to be a sign that is rejected" (Lk 2: 34). Anyone desirous of entering his world has to reject his own stand and adopt new standards. He must undergo a thorough conversion. That is the meaning of the solemn words of Jesus: "Unless you change and become like little children" (Mt 18: 3). The double condition emphasizes at once the absolute necessity and radical character of the conversion. Witnessing such a conversion to childlike faith on the part of a woman who could not have been much younger than himself, Jesus calls her "My daughter" (cf. Mk 5: 25-34).

21. Cf. AGNES OF JESUS (ed.), *The Story of a Soul* (Hertfordshire, 1973), pp. x-xi.

He looks upon his apostles as children and addresses them so because they are the ones whom he leads slowly to experience true conversion from their customary ways of thinking and behaving (cf. Mk 10: 23-25; Jn 13: 33). In fact he identifies them simply as the little ones (cf. Mt 10: 42; 25: 40, 45). Here we find sufficient indications of how grown-ups can develop the spirit of children in themselves.

By becoming children we gain a place in heaven. Heaven is the state of glory that God bestows on us, sharing with us his own glory. Heavenly glory may be defined as the public praise and honour bestowed by God himself. In other words, it is the supreme fulfilment of the desire that children have for recognition and appreciation of others. When Jesus bids us to set our hearts on the kingdom of heaven (cf. Lk 12: 31a), he equivalently asks us to long for the glory of heaven like children. We must therefore adopt the attitude of childlikeness which consists in so leading our life that we finally achieve glory, i.e., the acknowledgement by the heavenly Father who, in the presence of the whole creation, declares that it is glorious to be his children.²² At the parousia the Father will reveal us, his children, in all our glory along with the glorious Christ (cf. Col 3: 4). We believe what St John writes:

...we are already the children of God
but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed;
all we know is, that when it is revealed
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is (1 Jn 3: 2).

I would venture a suggestion here without elaborating on it. Jesus' words about becoming like little children are meant not only for individuals but also for groups and societies. They have a message definitely for the Church also. Once Jesus calls the group of his disciples "little flock", and interestingly enough in the same breath assures them of the kingdom (cf. Lk 12: 32). The Church too is a little flock and in its littleness must ever serve the world without presumption or prejudice, but with the certainty at the same time of inheriting the kingdom. Surely the parables of the mustard seed and the yeast (cf. Mt 13: 31-32, 33) are not without relevance here.

Basis of our Childhood

The real foundation for our becoming children is to be found in Jesus. Jesus was born of God himself (cf. Jn 1: 13), and he wants us to be born from above (cf. Jn 3: 3). God on his part

22. Cf. J. PIEPER, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

chose us especially and intended us to become true images of Jesus, so that he might be the eldest of his many children (cf. Rm 8:29). We are all now children of God in his beloved child Christ; and the proof is that God has sent the Spirit of Christ into our hearts that makes us cry out: "Abba, Father?" (cf. Ga 4:6).

Now the characteristic of Jesus in relation to his Father is that he was a child always. This is so obvious that it can escape our grasp. It is more fundamental than the relationship of children to their parents. For one thing children become adults who can no longer relate to their parents as small children do. Jesus never became an adult in relation to his Father. He always remained a child. He was indeed a naive child when he began speaking about his Father. For instance the parable of the child-apprentice portrays him in that light:

The Son can do nothing by himself;
he can do only what he sees the Father doing;
and whatever the Father does the Son does too.
For the Father loves the Son
and shows him everything he does himself (Jn 5:19-20).

In the manner of a child he often boasts of his Father in his confrontation with his opponents, as St John reports throughout his Gospel. At the very moment of his arrest he dares ask his disciples: "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father who would promptly send more than twelve legions of angels to my defence?" (Mt 26:53).

Jesus' childlike relation to his Father is a faint human echo of his eternal generation as the Word of God. Jesus in his divine nature originates from the Father, without any dependence whatsoever, receiving his nature which is numerically identical with that of the Father. By generation therefore God the begotten is pure childhood just as God the begetter is perfect fatherhood. The perfection of the fatherhood of God as such consists in the generation of the sole-begotten who subsists as the perfect expression of the Father's substance, so that there can be none other like him; and consequently, the childhood of the only-begotten is in itself perfect, without the necessity or even possibility of growing into adulthood. Jesus cannot but experience this his eternal, divine, childhood in his human life. His constant reference to his Father, even as an adult preacher, is an evidence of it: he has everything of the Father, from the Father. He does nothing on his own (cf. Jn 5:30). He speaks the words and does the works of the Father. He always does what pleases the Father (cf. Jn 8:29).

His revelation that the kingdom of God belongs to little children is therefore based on his own childlike belonging to the Father. It is truly God's childlike word of love. For us human beings maturity means growth, and growth means necessarily outgrowing our childhood and becoming independent. But for Jesus maturity is the actuation of an infinite ability to receive all the abundance of blessings that the Father wants to lavish on us. This ability of man, this fundamental openness which makes his being as a person, is best expressed, in relation to God, as childhood. In this our childhood, has Jesus left his own great childhood? For someone has said: "The Great is a born child; when he dies he gives his great childhood to the world."²³

23. R. TAGORE, *op. cit.*, n. 125.

Spiritual Life

Courage to Obey. By DATIUS KANJI-RAMUKIL, O.C.D. *Alwaye, Pontifical Institute of Theology and Philosophy*, 1979. Pp. xvi-290. Rs 20.

This doctoral dissertation is the first to investigate systematically the practice and the doctrine of obedience of St Teresa of Avila. It is based on a comprehensive study of the written works of the Reformer of the Carmel, including her letters, and occasionally makes use of her oral teaching or other testimonies.

The research is divided into two parts: first Teresa's experience of obedience and her living of this virtue. This study begins with her life at home and her early religious life; the important chapters 2 and 3 contemplate the mystic and foundress in her twofold obedience to God and to the Church. Chapter 4 sheds light on her relations with her religious superiors during this period. The second part aims at giving a systematic exposition of the Teresian doctrine of both obedience and authority. The first chapter of this part, which is the central chapter of the whole work, deals with

the role of obedience in spiritual, ecclesial and religious life, after the model of Christ. The last chapter evolves the Teresian concept of authority, describes Teresa's ideal of a superior and her own style of government, at once so human and so spiritual.

One easily perceives the unusual importance of St Teresa's example of, and teaching on, obedience, for, as a mystic, as a charismatic foundress and reformer, she struggled for unconditional faithfulness both to God's interior guidance and to those in the Church in whom she recognized Christ's authority. She lived this obedience in the critical period of the Reformation and of the Tridentine renewal, which has some analogy with our period of crisis. For Teresa, as for Ignatius Loyola whose doctrine she knew, obedience is essential to religious life.

This thesis is an excellent piece of research, including extensive references, indices and an abundant bibliography. A good number of original Spanish texts are quoted in the notes.

G. GILLEMEN, S.J.

Formation of Religious and Service of the Poor

IN THE CONTEXT OF NORTH INDIA

(continued)

J. VELAMKUNNEL, S.J.

IV. Towards a New Orientation in Formation

Having examined some of the drawbacks of the present formation of religious in India from the point of view of its social orientation, let us look into the possibilities for new directions in formation programmes. How can we provide a formation which is effectively turned to the poor people of India? How can we help our young men and women to cultivate a spiritual life which will integrate and support the apostolate to the masses. How can we train them to become "contemplative in action"? We would like to underscore here some elements of such a formation, and to propose certain formation mechanisms or structures embodying these goals.

A. Formation outside Formation Houses

Many genuine attempts are being made at re-working the old pattern of formation while preserving the traditional structure of formation houses. But often the new models tend basically to communicate the old values in a novel way, because the vision and determining factors have not been radically changed. The relevance of the present type of formation houses is evidently to be questioned. Even if it includes periodic exposure to the outside world — which happily is becoming more and more common — formation can still preserve an elitist value system. A large part of the time will have to be spent outside the houses, with people. Protracted periods of apostolic exposure must be followed by periods of reflection. This implies that the formation personnel and those in formation will spend a good amount of their time outside the traditional formation houses in a common search with people. Contact with people in their living conditions will give rise to new models of formation programmes and mechanisms.

*B. Formation through Experience with the Poor*¹³

Formation must be intimately linked with experiences with people belonging to the masses of India. Spiritual and intellectual formation must be given in the context of people's living conditions. This will help trainees to know and understand what people seek and suffer in their daily lives. In the Indian context, what they seek is human rights; what they suffer from is social injustice; what they lack is the basic necessities of life, such as food, shelter and clothing. Exposure to these should not be academic; we should enter with the people into a common search for a solution of their problems. This means some sort of participatory struggle along with them.¹⁴

The process of maturing in spiritual life—the vows, prayers, human relationships and community life—must integrate apostolic experiences. Many small problems of community life—small in themselves, but often magnified and made acute for lack of bigger problems in a self-enclosed atmosphere—will become gradually relativised. The cultivation of such values as self-sacrifice, poverty, detachment, etc., will be made easier if persons are exposed to people struggling, often heroically, under unbearable conditions. India offers such life-situations in abundance. A realistic knowledge of people derived from lived experience, will engender a Christian vision and shatter domestic “idols”, such as the glamour of fashionable clothes and the never satiated need for better food and greater comforts.

The poor can teach us that we would be happier with fewer commodities (against consumerism); they could help us to become more radical in our spirit and practice of poverty (against individual-

13. The following pages contain several insights drawn from various apostolic experiences with young religious in rural India, and also from a group-sharing by sisters at Navajyoti Niketan, Patna. This group, consisting of 13 sisters working in rural Bihar, were invited by the CRI Bihar unit to share their experiences with their superiors, at a meeting held on 19th November 1979. The author of this article is indebted to them and to many others for their sharing of experiences. Henceforth the meeting in Patna will be referred to as “NVJ Meeting”.

14. A group of young religious was taken to a village for an apostolic experience with the poor. It was a Harijan village with glaring social injustices. The oppressor, as the Mukhia of the Panchayat, had political power over the village; as the biggest landowner in the area, he had economic power, too. He controlled the votes and the wage system. Two and a half Kg grain was the daily wage fixed by him. Anyone who refused to work was denied access to the village. Instances of social injustice began pouring in as classes on adult literacy advanced. Struck by the horror of the situation, the religious decided to help to change it. A leadership training was conducted for the villagers which led to their conscientization and eventually to the formation of a farmworkers union. Though this union had a premature death, the nucleus of the group grew into a bigger union. It was reported that within two years, the Harijans of 10/15 villages collectively voted against the Mukhia and defeated him in the panchayat election. Here is an instance of involvement in people's struggle leading to social change, and at the same time to the personal transformation of religious.

ism); they could teach us that sharing brings joy (as in families); they could sensitise us to a more healthy attitude to the value of time and a greater availability to others (against our "over consciousness of time" and "preoccupation with efficiency"). They can give us a sense of the beauty of mother earth when in villages we are made to sit and sleep on the floor.

Sometimes we hear questions like this: "Should my young sisters be like the destitutes of India?" Those who raise such questions seem to see only one choice open to them: either the condition of the destitutes or the present elitist life-style. Perhaps the masses can help unlock a corner of our hearts and make us discover that "to be a religious in India is for me to share the life of ordinary women" — as one sister put it. The poor can teach us the difference between an unlimited quest for self-fulfilment and the joy of suffering for the survival of others. We can learn from them that our vow of chastity implies a self-less and unconditional love for others, a preferential love for those unloved in Indian society.¹⁵ Yahweh showed special love for the "anawims" of old! When questioned by people as to the purpose of religious celibacy, we sometimes feel helpless to convey its meaning. Chastity is freedom to love unconditionally and unselfishly as God loves; it demands from us a preferential love for those in Indian society who are rejected. What to think then of certain ways of experiencing God in the cosy atmosphere of small selective groups — raising alleluias "with joyful lips" — which often have no reference to the voiceless and emaciated lips of the marginalised section of our population? If religious communities in India make this one of their principal quests, their experience of reality is very partial. Millions of people living a subhuman existence do have experiences, noble and worthy to be cherished. The God who is present and encountered in elitist experience is the same God who touches the masses. "He touched me; and I grew." He is touching the untouchables of India, unnoticed by us. The vow of chastity has special relevance in the context of our preferential love and option for the poor. The God who emptied himself in the Garden of Olives and on the Cross is still emptying himself today in the lives of the oppressed people.

15. A religious sister, working among the poor and living in close identification with the people, disclosed the following experience. During the summer months, the people have to live on scanty food, often on leaves, roots and fruits gathered from the nearby jungle. Sometimes, the sister herself burst into tears for sheer hunger. She added that, when the paddy is harvested and the people have enough to eat, they fill her plate with rice. At such times, she is overcome with joy, seeing the happiness of the people. She would never think of exchanging this apostolically rich life for any other type of life offered in a regular convent.

We to whom Jesus has been revealed must be in a position to experience the self-emptying of God in the lives of the poor and to hear the cry of his Son dying in the anguish of the helpless. Is this beyond our capacity? Is not God calling Indian religious to such an experience, and through it, beckoning them to a deeper awareness of his presence among the masses?

C. Formation through Experience with Adults

Involvement in the lives of adults is essential. This gives the young religious an opportunity to acquire a living knowledge of the anxieties, aspirations and joys of the adult world. Slowly people are recognised, from within their own cultural milieu, as beautiful. Many mechanisms can be devised for this exposure; conducting classes for adults, literacy programmes, social service programmes including the transformation of people's value systems, adult catechesis, retreats for adults, etc. What is important is that the exposure must lead the young religious to involve themselves in the emotional and ideological world of adults, and not merely offer them opportunities for relief work. They must participate in activities which make them, not simply agents of charity, but of social change through ideological changes. They are not to be spectators of human tragedy but participants in people's struggles. This participation brings them out of the attitude of neutral observers, learners or cold bureaucrats, into that of persons truly committed to the cause of the poor, capable of taking a stand with them in conflict situations. This participatory role is essential for the transformation of their religious consciousness.

The young men and women who enter the religious life often seem to go through a period of psychological "regression", especially during the early part of formation. For some, this may even continue till the time of ordination or the final profession. In a few cases, perhaps, there had been no growth into adulthood before entry into the novitiate, and hence the process of maturing takes many painful years. In all cases, genuine growth must be fostered through contact with the adult world; this is the most important element of apostolic formation. If apostolic experiences are mostly with the children's world, the young religious will remain in a prolonged state of adolescence. Growth into religious maturity will be fostered by apostolic challenges in a working situation, like helping adults to face their problems, answering questions thrown by adults regarding vows, prayer, etc., and articulating for them the purpose of religious life. In the process of such exposures the danger of introvert growth

in a community of adolescents is easily avoided. This approach to formation also offers better opportunities for sensitising young religious to the urgency of a more radical existence. The method implies that the formation personnel enters with them into a process of reflection on their concrete life-experience. There will be a common search on behalf of the people and a sharing of life in depth.

Through such exposure young religious will learn certain conditions required for an effective apostolate to the masses, such as a simple life-style to win acceptance with the ordinary people of rural India, and the adoption of the local culture. It is necessary to be patient with the slow rhythm of people's life and of their growth in faith. Readiness to learn from them is an important aspect of inculturation and a way of respecting them. People will teach us the meaning of solidarity, it is they also who will show us what to do to help them to help themselves.

D. Formation through Apostolic Prayer

Often the experience of religious who enter village apostolate in a radical way is that the customary spiritual exercises — meditation at fixed hours, Mass, spiritual reading, rosary, examination of conscience and other exercises of piety — are found difficult and often meaningless, and hence given up.¹⁶ The methods and techniques taught in the formation houses do not seem to work, as they were understood. Many struggle to be faithful to their prayer life; many give up prayer because it is not satisfying. Many others develop new ways of praying suited to the needs of the situation.¹⁷ Quite a number adjust the apostolate to suit their traditional prayer life. In most cases, either the apostolate suffers or the dynamism of faith is deprived of its full flowering in prayer experience. Is there a way of forestalling such situations? In other words, how can we train our young men and women in apostolic prayer? Much time is spent on instructions on the nature and methods of prayer. Yet experience teaches us that conflicts arise between the "monastic type" of prayer learnt in the houses of formation and the needs of the apostolate in the field. Is it possible for us to create conditions during the

16. Half of the group in the NVJ meeting confessed that they had given up the traditional methods of prayer taught in the formation house, as soon as they entered the rural apostolate. One seems to be still struggling to adjust her apostolate to suit her old prayer-routine, while the others have discovered a prayer life suited to the apostolic demands of the village.

17. Eight of thirteen sisters in the NVJ meeting observed that they have learnt to find God habitually in the apostolic experiences of their daily life. Five have Mass only thrice, twice or even once a month; yet they find their prayer life more meaningful and richer now than when they were living the regular convent life.

period of formation whereby young religious could be introduced to the experience of apostolic prayer ?

Training people in apostolic prayer would mean that they are engaged in an apostolate of some kind or other. There is a close link between life-style and the experience of prayer.¹⁸ It is difficult to foster apostolic prayer in a "monastic type" of community set-up. Underscoring the importance of cultivating apostolic prayer from the early years of formation and its connection with person-centred activities, Bishop Saupin said:

Another point which needs to be stressed concerns the pattern of our prayer-life. In living this type of life I have absolutely no doubt that the spiritual life grows, prayer life changes. The whole prayer pattern of those involved in the rural apostolate is not a dead Gospel, but the Gospel becomes alive in the lives of people. This is the prayer of the young people in the apostolate.¹⁹

Again, in answer to the question, "What rhythm of prayer do you foresee for those engaged in the rural apostolate ?", he continued:

The prayer life of those engaged in the rural apostolate comes out of the life of the people. If life is person-oriented, there is a felt need to pray, and prayer life becomes person-oriented. If a group is work-oriented, then prayer becomes an observance and we have the heresy of action where work is considered prayer.²⁰

The pattern of prayer life cultivated in most formation houses is suited to a type of apostolic activity with a regular time-table. Many aids are provided for growing in a kind of prayer which can truly be called "monastic". Let us take one example: the methods used for keeping the presence of God during the day. Ejaculatory prayers at fixed times, adjusting to the rhythm of bells in the community, intervals and visits to the Blessed Sacrament, periods of silence, awareness exercises such as getting attuned to the rhythmic movements of the body—these are some of the methods taught. There are other techniques devised to reach a level of familiarity with God. A person who has learnt these methods may outgrow them, or remain dependent on them. In the first case, once placed in a apostolic situation he will work things out for himself and grow in prayer experience. In the other case, he is likely, after some

18. In the NVJ meeting it was noticed that most of those who have not yet found their way of praying in the village are those who continue to live in a traditional convent set-up. These go out to the people at fixed times and return home after work. Those, on the contrary, who found prayer in the village a pleasant experience had a different life-style: sleeping in the families, sharing people's food, travelling on foot or in buses, having a lay person as companion for the apostolate, etc. On the whole this group seems to have reached a deeper integration of life-style and spiritual life.

19. Bishop SAUPIN, Key-Note Address, CRI General Assembly, 1979.

20. Ibid.

efforts, to give up prayer, at least temporarily, and may even justify this in the name of his commitment to people. If on the contrary the young religious are trained in an apostolic context of life, and their attempts at growing in the presence of God are linked to human beings and experiences, the pattern of their prayer life will develop in a way which is more attuned to the demands of an apostolic life.²¹

Religious whose life is people-centred grow in prayer through involvement in human life. Human experiences such as physical sufferings, hopelessness under oppressive conditions, struggle to obtain social justice, hunger, nakedness, being abandoned by families and associates, growth in human dignity, joys of married life, victory over sin, etc. — all these can become means of entering into the mystery of Christ dying and rising with the masses. Our involvement reaches to the depth of human beings in the measure in which we ourselves are rooted in God and open to the transcendent dimension of human existence. There is a difference between a life which is person-oriented²² and one which is work-oriented, even if the work is for the good of the people. Both approaches set in motion distinct mental operations and attitudes which have their bearing on faith-experience. Here we see, from the point of view of the dynamics of faith, that service to the poor must go beyond structural analysis and help for economic growth. If it does not lead to an experience of transcendent love, action on behalf of the poor may as well be a means of releasing one's inner constraints.²³

E. Formation through Re-shaping of Religious Concepts

It has been mentioned that religious formation is loaded with value content. Young persons enter religious life with a partial understanding of these values, and with a commitment to the person

21. A group of young religious in formation were taken out to villages for apostolic exposure to the poor. Within two weeks, all but one had discarded "prayer-life" as practised in the formation house. After a time, they began to search for new ways of praying because of their experience of emptiness and because prayer had become a felt need for the apostolate.

22. A large proportion of the sisters at the NVJ meeting revealed a "people-centred life". It is interesting to note that most of those who claimed to experience God habitually through their apostolic involvement and to have developed a apostolic way of prayer, come from this group whose life is centred on people.

23. It was noticeable at the NVJ meeting that, in spite of being often misunderstood by their communities or even superiors, the sisters did not manifest any bitterness. Conflicts between their apostolic vision and the demands of traditional community life had been resolved through a process of purification and a change of hearts, leading to a deeper acceptance of each other. One of the superiors remarked at the end: "So often we find that people working for the poor are embittered against the community or Church hierarchy. Instead of being agents of change in the attitude of their communities, they often become more and more alienated from the group. However, this group seems to be different."

of Jesus. During the years of formation they have to grow in their commitment, which often enough includes a re-education in their understanding of values. Sometimes, there may arise conflicts between the traditional and the more recent understanding of those values.

Certain qualities are traditionally accepted as Christian virtues befitting religious, and others are looked upon as unbecoming to "good religious", v.g.: compassion/critical distance, obedience/revolt, submission/resistance, conformity/spirit of questioning. Evidently there are various shades of meaning to these concepts. Growth in sensitivity to the complexity of situations and a new understanding of the call of the Gospel can change a person's vision, as also his value judgments regarding virtues. Take, for example, the virtue of compassion towards those who suffer. Solace and relief offered to such persons is an aspect of Christian love. But those persons can be the victims of unavoidable calamities, or of the selfish designs of man against his brother. In the former case, compassion is certainly laudable; but the latter case may call for a love in deed, other than compassion. Relief work is easily understood as Christian action. But what about influencing the course of events and forestalling situations of misery? The need to effect a change of heart deserves recognition. But what about bringing about structural changes in society to make a place in it for others? Running schools and teaching children were and still are considered acts of love. Could we confer the same respectability on education for political action and the conscientisation of the masses to obtain their human rights? Running elite schools for non-Christians is readily considered a form of service of faith, and no one questions this seriously. Could we also consider involvement in social struggles a service of faith? Perhaps unconsciously, new patterns of exercising charity in changing situations of human lives and cultures are not given adequate recognition. The education of adults to claim their rights in society by participating in the decision-making process, is understood as a virtue; but perhaps only with difficulty. For in the Church we are encouraged to have our decisions made for us by superiors, and we are taught that accepting their decisions is a virtue of high premium. Here we see how the way of educating young religious in the spirit of the Institute results in the formation of a mental process which will affect the apostolate. Much religious instruction follows the so-called "indoctrinating" or "banking method", as Paulo Freire calls it. New ways of exercising charity, new interpretations of the law of love, suited to contemporary needs and in line with the discoveries of social and behavioural sciences will have to be conferred "blessedness".

Missionary zeal is another virtue which needs a new interpretation. When a girl motivated by the desire of serving the sick enters the novitiate, her understanding of service is likely to be in terms of offering relief and comfort through curative rather than promotive and preventive medical services. Her missionary idealism is somewhat conditioned by her understanding of medical service. Similarly, when a boy enters the novitiate to preach Jesus Christ or to do mission work, his understanding of it may well be in terms of "establishing the Church" or "converting pagans". He may be thrilled with the idea of serving the poor to show his love for Jesus; but his understanding of service may be in terms of relief work, not of conscientization and the struggle for social justice. Hence he will need re-education in the concepts of missionary zeal and love. Re-education will also be needed to give young religious a better grasp of current theological thinking and to help them integrate new forms of apostolate into their prayer life.

Conclusion

Religious formation is a process of preparing apostles to fulfil a specific mission in the world which cannot be deduced merely from theological premises. It is also to be determined in the context of a definite people and their concrete needs. We began this article by pointing to changes in theological perspectives which affect the nature of formation. We then proceeded to look at the social reality of India and tried to understand the power structure behind it. Against this background we analysed some features of contemporary religious formation in the North Indian context, and found it lacking in social orientation. We also noted that it alienates young religious from the poor and inserts them into an elite culture. Furthermore, we found that the formation imparted creates in them certain needs which can only be met in an elitist society, thereby conditioning future religious communities. Trends supportive of social alienation are set in operation during the years of formation, which can only be fulfilled in communities of a similar type. We concluded by suggesting that, as part of our common search we draw upon experiments being conducted in different places in North India, for a new orientation to formation. Formation structures suited to the concrete situation of each place will have to be worked out in order to incarnate the values which have been proposed. Many more experiments need to be conducted and evaluated to evolve better mechanisms for religious formation.

Searching for the Mind of Christ

Joe CURRIE, S.J.

I. A Pastoral Problem

Some days before, I had left the theologate in Delhi to direct a community retreat in a large rural parish in north India. My stay there happened to coincide with the jubilee celebrations of the parish's founder, who returned late the previous evening for the occasion. The following morning, after the Sunday liturgy, I found myself sitting next to the jubilarian on the church verandah (which he had built years before) as we witnessed a very impressive *swagatam*. Group after parish group tried to outdo one another in a series of colourful items that clearly demonstrated the parishioners' genuine gratitude and warm affection for the elderly missionary.

Toward the end of the programme, the jubilarian, obviously touched and filled with nostalgia, leaned across and shook his head sadly.

"Do you see this, Father?" he began. "What wonderful people we have here...and good Christians, too! But, do you know? ...Some of our young priests coming out of Delhi and Pune are destroying their simple faith. They get up in the pulpit and tell the people there is no hell. They even discourage them from saying the rosary...By the way, Father, where do *you* come from?"

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It was a regional meeting, and a search for apostolic priorities was the main point on the agenda. The discussion, as such discussions tend to do, was eliciting more heat than light when one seminarian rose to make a point.

"Whatever be the goals we choose", he began confidently, "we have to remember three things here." He then went on to cite two principles from current missiology, but then faltered on the third. Much to his own embarrassment, and to the dismay of the older members of the group, he had to ask his classmate sitting next to him; "What was that *third* point that Father X, taught us this year?"

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A Sister who for years had worked with a village catechetical team shared with the members of a general assembly of her congregation the pain and confusion she experienced when a young companion, for whom she had longed to join her in her work, arrived fresh from the novitiate and within a week's time had passed judgment on the work of her life.

"All that you have been doing here is old-fashioned and wrong", was the quick and final verdict of the newcomer.

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Not so long ago, an older companion priest complained to me: "Somehow or other, our young priests who come out after training think that they know all the answers and have nothing to learn from the older generation. There is a barrier today that just did not exist some years ago. This is, of course, bad for the older generation, because we have to work out our apostolate in isolation."

Compare this with the remark of a newly ordained priest, just returned from six months of pastoral experience under a seasoned parish priest. "I don't think my guide was open to any suggestions that I tried to make. In fact, he seemed suspicious of *any* new thing. I got the impression that he didn't much care for the 'new' theology, nor for us young priests coming out of theology."

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The common denominator of all the above recollections and examples, I feel, is the obvious and growing tension between theology and ministry, which is proving to be a costly deterrent to our pastoral efforts. Our effectiveness as ministers of the Word and messengers of the Good News is being seriously diminished by our divided ideologies and theologies. Not only is the laity, which has been largely ignored and discounted in post-Vatican renewal efforts, growing restive, resistant and resentful, but we clergy and religious ourselves often present a picture of a confused and fragmented leadership. *Persons* come to be identified and labelled with *positions*, so that defending a particular point of view is tantamount to defending *oneself*, with all the attendant defensive behaviour involved in the latter. This is, in the last analysis, a *pastoral problem*, although it may indicate a spiritual crisis as well.

Our primary task, as ministers of the Word, is to serve the *faith*, not this or that theology: and it will be a lived experience of faith, openly shared and reflected upon, that will help to bridge the gap —

by no means *just* a "generation" gap — between theology and ministry. For if it is possible to "theologise" without faith, it is equally possible to run an efficient parish, organise groups and teach and guide individuals without faith. We may be good "professionals", but no more, and this would be to deny our first vocation as ministers of the Word. Without faith, we go to the people with empty hands. With faith, and the openness and courage and good will that go with it, we shall find the unity to bridge our differences (cf. Eph 4, 5-6).

Theology and ministry, like theory and praxis, are complementary functions in our service of the faith, ideally stimulating and correcting each other. The gift of faith, or the experience of God's power and presence within and around us, has a richness and a diversity that has constantly to be discovered and re-discovered. We do this in *theology*, bringing our minds to bear upon this faith, not just as a comprehensive system of thought passed on from one generation to another, but also as an event happening today. Hence, we discover our faith, too, in the midst of our experience of *ministry*, for it is precisely here that the Lord is to be found (Mt 25). But "praxis" is more than just doing or acting; it also includes reflecting upon and evaluating our role and function, to discern and discover the directions of God.

It is here, in the area of reflection — *theological* reflection — that theology and ministry can hope to find a workable meeting ground. Against a backdrop of faith, which informs and inspires the process, theological reflection allows theology and experience to confront each other. The outcome could well be more than just human wisdom. Such a process, engaging the talents and experience of all concerned, could lead to a "wisdom taught by the Spirit"; in fact, the very "mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2, 13, 16).

We need not be professional theologians to engage in such a reflection. Many in the ministry despair of reflecting theologically because "that's for the experts". They are like the saintly person I once knew, whose life had obviously been transformed by his love for the Scriptures, but who nonetheless confessed that he could not pray the Gospel properly because he was not a trained exegete! A theological background may help us in the process — and most of us have that — but a faith-centred reflection is also open to the power of the Word to enlighten and to change. Moreover, the experience of ministry is a rich and essential ingredient of theological reflection, testing theological positions and avoiding the dangers of a sterile, ivory-tower theology.

The interplay of theology and ministry in the process of theological reflection prevents us from identifying this or that position with the faith. It also keeps us from falling prey to the temptation — always dysfunctional for a minister of the Word — of taking ourselves too seriously, by putting *our* ideas and *our* work not only before those of others, but also before the wisdom and ways of the Lord. In so doing, we could squander grace by putting all sorts of obstacles in its way, and we could neutralise the good will and zeal of many a fellow-worker, not in the name of faith, but in promoting this or that ideology. And we might close ourselves, even though we pride ourselves on being “open”, to the possible invitations of the Lord, by failing to recognise him, whether in the insights and gropings of theologians, or in the most commonplace experience encountered in ministry.

II. *Conflicting Mentalities*

Two sorts of Christianity are in existence side by side at present (and perhaps in different forms they have always coexisted). The line between them transcends denomination as it transcends age, education or ecclesiastical status. The significant division in Christianity is not therefore between Churches but within them, and they are at war with one another. There are lots of possible labels for these two conditions, but perhaps the most apt would be ‘open’ for the one and ‘closed’ for the other. Inevitably, each side claims to have God on its side, claims that Jesus was one of them, and that the Church has always backed it.¹

This is by no means a fresh insight nor a new division. Segundo, while attempting to analyse the unconscious drives and effects of traditional pastoral practices in Latin America, studies the mentalities of the closed and the open, or “consumer”, societies.² Dulles offers “models” of the Church, each with its own mentality, but stresses that no one model or mentality suffices to embrace the mystery of the Church.³ A diversity of mentalities (theologies, perspectives, ideologies), therefore, we shall always have with us — conflicting or complementary, open or closed — call them what you will. But is there any way to make them work *for* us instead of *against* us?

What *does* seem worth reflecting upon in the essay quoted above, however, is the author's view that “open” and “closed” sometimes cut across the more familiar labels, “progressive” and “conservative”: “How open is Hans Küng?” he asks. “How closed is Pope John

1. Clifford LANGLEY, “Two Minds on the Matter”, *The Tablet*, December 15th, 1979, p. 1222.

2. Juan Luis SEGUNDO, *The Hidden Motives of Pastoral Action*, Orbis Books, New York, 1978.

3. Avery DULLES, *Models of the Church*, New York, Doubleday and Co., 1974.

Paul II?" Is it possible for one to be as dogmatic (and therefore as defensive) as the other? Against the background of the pastoral problem described above, it might be worthwhile to probe this question more deeply.

Let us, then, take a closer look at these opposing (or complementary) mentalities. By offering the following categories, I would not presume to be able to make water-tight compartments into which each of us could conveniently be placed. In fact, just the opposite is my intention, for I feel that such an examination will reveal how difficult (and perhaps unfair) it is to label one or other person. The contrasting views presented below, then, are intended rather to help us better to understand the tensions already described in order to come to grips with them and initiate a more fruitful dialogue between the two "mentalities". It would be my hope that such a comparison would "foster the kind of pluralism that heals and unifies, rather than a pluralism that divides and destroys".⁴

The "Closed" Mentality

The "Open" Mentality

A. Favourite model of the Christian community

The permanent and perfect *institution*, characterised by:

a. Clarity, certainty and precision with regard to goals, plans and norms.

b. Fixed values and thought patterns.

c. Unity in uniformity, and so highly visible.

d. Right and ready answers.

The *people* of God, or the *body* of Christ, characterised by:

a. Complexity, ambiguity and unpredictability; a certain "messiness" associated with organic growth.

b. Continual searching: "drifting and sifting".

c. Unity in a subtle interplay of various parts and functions, and so not always apparent.

d. More than one answer to most problems.

B. Basic Ecclesiology

1. The Church is the *means* of salvation, serving primarily those who belong to it.

2. Concern for *quantitative* universality: increasing numbers.

3. The Church is always the best place for saving one's soul.

1. The Church is the *sign* of salvation, set up for all of mankind.

2. Concern for *qualitative* universality: the "leaven"; the "little flock".

3. The human failings of the Church may in fact hinder some from observing the evangelical law of love.

C. Community Functioning

1. *Membership*

Through observance of a uniform creed, code and cult.

Through a diversity of functions within a shared common vision.

4. DULLES, p. 11.

2. Leadership

a. *From above* with the leader holding a privileged position.

b. Respect founded on submission to authority.

a. *Functional*, with the leader perceived by the group as best to serve its needs and goals.

b. Respect grounded on mutual acceptance and accountability.

3. Freedom

To be *controlled* as suspect, for man is often overcome by a tendency toward evil.

To be *fostered* and protected, since man (even with his tendency to sin) has an inborn positive thrust towards God.

4. Communication

Mostly *one-way*: vertical and downward.

Continued efforts toward *two-way* communication, horizontal as well as vertical.

5. Conflicts

Most often, *bad* and to be avoided, as they endanger unity.

Can be *healthy*, and, if managed correctly, can forge a stronger unity.

6. Change

In all but material things to be *resisted* as threatening the *status quo*.

Can be *good and bad*, depending on the situation and the motives of the change agents.

D. Basic Concerns and Preoccupations

1. Biggest Problem

Secularism, atheism: anti-Christian environment.

People problems: poverty and injustice.

2. Best Solution

Quality education and straightforward evangelisation.

Struggle for justice at various levels.

3. Attitude toward "Outsiders"

Suspicious and cautious.

Positive and cooperative.

Just who is "open" and who "closed" is not always easy to judge, but one sure gauge would be a person's willingness to share his own views and convictions... and to listen attentively to those of others, even and especially when they are considerably different from his own. "We have talked, but we have not listened", was the summary statement, I am told, describing one inter-religious "dialogue". This might well sum up many a conversation between a so-called progressive and a conservative, or even between two progressives.

I have participated in a meeting where professionals trained in identifying and handling defensive behaviour in others lapsed into a highly defensive posture when the value of their helping skills was honestly questioned by an outsider. I have attended many a *colloquium* — theological, ministerial, inter-faith, pro-justice — where talking, and aggressive talking at that, was more the order of the day than listening and learning. Most of the *communication* was one-way and defensive ("I'm right and you're wrong, and there are no two ways about it!"), the characteristic of the "closed" mentality, although most if not all of the participants would have claimed to be open.

Leadership is another area where mentalities get confused. Subtle rivalries, group politics and expensive "installations" belie a functional notion of leadership. Many a progressive, despite lip-service paid to Paulo Freire and "conscientisation", aspires after a leadership role as a position of power and privilege, giving him the right to think for, and control, others.

Claver has rightly identified this discrepancy found in not a few involved in the justice struggle:

The great temptation for those of us who want to take the idea of the Church of the Poor seriously is probably this, that we sooner or later begin to *think for* the poor. I wonder if we are not falling headlong into that temptation here: we think up solutions, elaborate them even to the point of creating hard and fast ideologies out of them, propose them as programs of action to be slavishly executed. We know best what is good for others. We think *from above*, as it were; we hardly give a thought to the thinking and action that must concurrently go on *from below*.⁵

A somewhat sobering commentary to the essay that began this section, written by a reader a few weeks later, will serve to conclude this brief discussion on conflicting mentalities:

Can the "closed" Christian guess at how important it is that the "open" Christian say his piece, regularly? I doubt it. Can the "open" Christian guess at the possible harm done to the "closed" Christian by his constant hammering away at his favourite subject? I doubt it. The mercy of God must indeed encompass both. One is left to pick one's way gingerly through this mess, hour by hour — thus proving the need to be "open" in a "closed" world. . . .

Who has more faith? — the "closed" Christian whose historical sense is so weak that he does not realise how much of his own belief is the result of evolution or the "open" Christian whose practical sense is so weak that he does not realise how much of his own belief is the result of prior and comfortable stability? Who knows? Everything will be well if neither thinks they have got God taped and subservient to their ends — however good those may seem to be.⁶

5. Francisco CLAVER, cited in *Euntes*, XII (1979), n. 7, p. 542.

6. "Letters", *The Tablet*, January 5th, 1980, p. 11.

III. *The Mind of Christ*

It is not uncommon to hear, from progressive and conservative quarters alike, certain strains of infallibility like, "...and *this* is the will of God for us today". Can we be so sure that we have, in fact, found the mind of Christ? Thomas Merton, one who defied labels and as a consequence alternately endeared himself to and then confused and disappointed members of both "sides", showed himself to be a true Christian, searching for the mind of Christ, when he wrote, a decade before his apparently senseless death in Bangkok (in the very midst of his restless odyssey that carried him beyond Christian parameters):

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. *But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.*⁷ (*Italics mine*).

Is not this an echo of the faith-experience of Abraham's "exodus" in *total* trust and openness to the Lord? And was not Jesus' own gnawing hunger and consuming desire to do his Father's will but the very fulfilment of such faith, such openness? "I wonder", muses the letter-writer already quoted, "what people leaning towards this 'closed' attitude (of looking for certainties) really make of Christ's cry on the cross: 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'..."⁸

Acquiring the mind of Christ involves a true emptying of ourselves and a total submission (an "obedience of faith") to God. Such an attitude is able to embrace and yet transcend any and all "mentalities". But such openness and courage require grace and, from our side, spiritual discipline and conversion of heart.

In our on-going search for the mind of Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, we have the challenge of the gospel to guide us especially in the radical demands of the sermon on the mount and of the doctrine of the cross. "Anyone who hears my words", Matthew has Jesus conclude his sermon, "and puts them into practice is like the wise man who built his house on rock" (Mt 7, 24). "Whoever would preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake

7. Thomas MERTON, *Thoughts in Solitude*, New York, Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy, 1958, p. 83.

8. "Letters", *loc. cit.*

and for the gospel's will preserve it" (Mk 8, 35) was rank "foolishness" to the ways and mentalities of the world; yet "Christ crucified" is the "wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1, 24).

The cost of such wisdom comes high, if our ears have not grown dull to the gospel message. For the mind of Christ includes forgiving and even loving our enemies, avoiding judgment of others, shunning the hypocrisy of empty words without action, and counting *all* the securities of this world—even one's own life—to be of little worth next to the security of relying, in faith, on God's promises revealed in Jesus.

This is the faith, the wisdom, the presence and power of God in our midst—that should make us one, despite our different opinions and mentalities: "May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith, and may love be the root and foundation of your life...that love which surpasses all knowledge..." (Eph 3, 17). It is only when we *think* we have all the answers to our problems, says Paul to the worldly-wise Corinthians, that we're really in trouble (1 Cor 3, 18-21).

Christ was able to include, among his first disciples and apostles, all types of temperaments and contradictory ideologies as well. The Twelve were certainly not "think-alikes". Yet, despite fundamental differences, say, between Peter and Paul (Gal, 2, 11-14), they were united in their love for Jesus and in their shared commitment to spread the gospel and continue his mission. This "common vision"—a *faith* vision, essentially—was able to subsume any difference and surmount any conflict. They could live with, and work through, opposing mentalities. And some of these conflicts at least, like Paul's confrontation of the Judaisers, were instrumental and decisive in evolving a stronger Christian unity. This was possible because these early ministers of the Word had, by grace and by choice, put on the mind of Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, surpassing any merely human wisdom.

The Word of God and the Word of Ads

Gabriel GONSALVES, S.J.—Gladys D'SOUZA, R.S.C.J.

TWO different worlds are created by the Word of Scripture and the word of advertising. Each communicates a message, a philosophy and a way of life. It is important to understand the nature and the dynamics of each if we are to come to grips with the historical forces shaping society and the task of social reconstruction in the light of the Gospel challenges.

The word of the Scriptures is being revealed to man today alongside of the word of the advertisements, which imposes itself on man's conscious and cognitive levels. Both the Word of the Scriptures and the words of advertisements have a message and a medium. While the Word is both the medium and the message, the word of the advertising media remains only a medium, though admittedly not disassociated from its specific philosophy and way of life. On the one hand, worship and prayer, hymns, the celebration of one's faith through religious rites convey a particular message to the believer. But, on the other hand, film songs, radio communications, TV commercials and newspaper ads constantly bombard the conscious and the subconscious levels of man with another message.

Modern advertising is a powerful force, forging value systems to undergird specifically desired consumer behaviour — value systems which conflict with those nurtured by the Word of Scriptures. The Canadian psychologist, Kenneth O'Brien, maintains that TV viewers, or film fans for that matter, can be conditioned to behave in a certain way — very much like a puppet on a string — through the use of sophisticated techniques perfected by the advertising industry. Man for the advertising agency is not the biblical subject of action, but an object to be acted upon. Why is this so? What is the inner dynamics within the economic system, that transforms him increasingly from a subject to a passive object?

A high rate of consumerism is essential to the continued survival and expansion of modern monopoly capitalism. The immediate purpose and thrust of advertising is to boost sales by creatign a

climate in which buying, selling, bargaining and saving emerge as important day to day transactions. In his role as producer, man finds himself rated by the quantum of unity he produces. He finds himself similarly assessed and driven as a consumer. He thus becomes the centre of a dialectic between quickening rates of production and consumption. His world of activity, of thought, his values and options are fashioned by forces outside of his control as an individual. He is deprived of his individual role as a self-decision maker. He is forced away by the demands of realistic living from the call of the Scriptures to a gregarious life of human equality and fraternity. He is denied the right to build a community of faith through co-operation and collaboration. This role, assumed by modern advertising in creating a specific mass commercial culture, demands serious reflection. So does the efficiency with which it operates as indicated by O'Brien's studies.

At the general assembly of Bishops in Rome (1974), dealing with the theme "Evangelisation of the Modern World", a word of caution has been voiced: The mass media tend to be so much taken up with the established order of things that all they can manage to produce is a carbon copy man whom that order wants produced in its own image — a far cry from the 'new' man of the Gospel.

What is "the established order of things"? What are the characteristics of the existing social order? Why do the mass media "tend to be so much taken up with the established order"? And why do they produce "a carbon copy man", as opposed to the new man of the Gospel? As a sub-system of society, the function and orientation of the mass media are determined by the thrust of the whole society. It is but natural then that the media reproduce carbon copy men reflecting this thrust. It would be futile to investigate in isolation the images projected, the values created and sustained, the expectations of the public, their patterns of response and responsibility. If a critical perception of the operational dynamics of modern advertising as a powerful agent of mass education is to be developed, it should be done in the context of societal analysis.

The mass-based educational thrust of advertising has three inter-related goals in the framework of the capitalist societies in which we find ourselves: a reduction and denial of our collective needs; a repression of our authentic individual needs; a creation of artificial needs.

Reduction and Denial of Collective Needs

A sensitivity to collective needs such as clean drinking water (even just water in some areas), electricity, housing, sewage and drainage systems, roads and public means of transport, public health

services, education, and employment do not feature in advertisements. The expectations, needs and values projected by the advertisements are ego-driven and individualist, a far cry from the creation of the 'new' man of the Gospel based on brotherhood and responsibility for the weaker members of society. Consider the impact of such a value system and societal perspectives on the deprived mass-base of society. Their basic needs are dimmed before the glare of artificial, superfluous, individualistic needs, hammered out in imposing shapes and colours on billboards in both urban and rural areas. The people's potential for mass demand and struggle is atomized by the encouragement of self-centred concern.

The presence of a few government billboards in the city of Bombay, reminding the scheduled caste citizen of his dignity and his right to equality with his fellowmen, are interesting from this dimension. Churches and Christian institutions have yet to discover and use their resources to promote an awareness for the collective fulfilment of human needs. *Gloria Dei homo vivens*: the more man is man, the truer an image of God will he be.

Repression of Authentic Individual Needs

The individual's need for love, for work, the recognition of his potential to contribute creatively to the productive thrust of society are blurred out of focus. These needs are converted into things. Love is viewed as expressed in giving and receiving things. Personal interaction is effected through the medium of things. Creativity almost becomes synonymous with a high rate of consumption of different products.

There is a strong concern today, forged by various social sciences and a personalized spirituality, for the potential and needs of the individual as individual. The need to love oneself, to recognize one's self-worth, helps to alert the individual to his status and mission as a child of God. What perhaps calls for greater critical perception and assessment are the social forces that deny the individual his authentic needs. How far and how effectively are these communicated? It is important to supplement the personal and individual approach to consciousness and growth with this social dimension. For this is educating Christians to the sinful world situation, to social sin which strangles individual growth and development. What advertising output is there on the sinful structures that violate and oppress human dignity?

Creation of Artificial Needs

Advertising makes a massive drive to create a taste and demand for a continuous differentiation of output. While we can boast of

superfine textiles and various fabric styling, we have not yet produced enough ordinary standard cloth at controlled prices to clothe our millions. While we have spawned needs for various technological expertise and scientific training, with institutions to provide these, we have failed to bring the very basic skill of literacy to the masses to enable them to read and experience the Word of the Scriptures.

What then is the word that is most loudly proclaimed and what is the message propagated? Is the total image or person created and projected by modern advertising consistent with the person presented by the Scriptures as a child of God, an image of the Father? Is the good news of the mass media consistent with the good news of the Gospels? Does the message of the mass media echo the Biblical message that happiness consists in being, not in having? Is the worth of the person and societies of people identified as greater than property and power derived from wealth? Do the concepts of happiness, identity, love and acceptability, commitment, service and security, communicated by the two words, reinforce or undermine each other? What are the stereotypes created? Of women? Of men? Of minority groups? Of the poor? Of the successful? Of the acceptable? If the two words do not articulate the same messages, what impact do the conflicting messages have on individuals and on social groups? Which channel has more persuasive compelling influence, and to what effect? What are the implications for the education and formation of Christians?¹

The message of the Scriptures forms part of the very environment enveloping the Christian from early childhood. The child receives the Word through both the informal (at home) and the formal (school and Church) channels of religious education. Sunday sermons, missions and retreats, marriage preparation courses, etc., ensure the continuing religious education of adults, expounding and concretizing the message of the Gospel challenge. How then does the practising Christian, living within a competitive profit-oriented market society meet the impact of the word of the advertisement? We shall leave this an open question as we reflect on two constant messages of the ads with significant implications.

Firstly, *certain, if not instant, relief/success is possible through XYZ commodity*. What would be the implications of this message constantly bombarding our conscious and subconscious levels?

1. In a long development contrasting Scripture quotations with captions from the ads, the authors show the glaring contradiction which exists between the message and values of the Word of God and of the advertising business. This development is regrettably omitted for lack of space. (ed.)

Pain is irksome and problems disturb our equilibrium. Kenneth O'Brien's research discovery indicates how consumers can be led from one commodity to another in the chase for relief with a diversification of products. Take as illustration 700 drugs sold under 20,000 brand names—in several cases there is a rather spurious product differentiation between drugs with identical pharmacological properties. This is how the creativity of the producer must function to sustain production and consumption levels. Profit-oriented production limits itself to demand, to those who can buy, and as such the market is greatly narrowed in contrast to need-based production. Constant diversification is, consequently, one way of sustaining the market. Consumer saturation and fatigue has to be combated.

Now Divine Providence has always been appealed to—in addition to these various commodities—for help and relief. Could not the instant relief-chasing consumer mentality produce a similar phenomenon whereby the petitioner turns pilgrim from one Saint to another, from one devotion to another, while the number of devotions and places of pilgrimage are also simultaneously multiplied and diversified. Is not God besieged with a vast array of offerings and vows until the petition is either granted or dropped in despair? What effects will such an approach to the Divine have on the faith level of the community, its prayer life and its commercial base to worship?

Secondly, *love is expressed in terms of things given*. If such a message is internalized, what will be the dilemma of the worshipper as he seeks to express his love of God, his gratitude for favours received and his concern for his neighbour in terms of gifts and offerings? The gift offerings vary today as before according to the economic capacity of the person and the nature of the favour granted. These would include thanksgiving masses, offerings of gold and silver ornaments, donations of money, things and food, wax candles, flowers, incense and fruit. Each has a price to be paid, which can have its own particular pressures on those who have a limited income. They would give until it hurts and yet give cheerfully. This beautiful generosity, this beautiful desire to express one's love, could have thought-provoking implications for those who do not have the required purchasing power to express their filial piety. Do they suffer from a feeling of guilt? Do they withdraw from worship, unable to measure up to established practices? Or do they make the grade but at such social costs as hunger or medicare sacrificed? Did Christ have a message for all time when he scattered the money-changers' coins and said to the pigeon sellers: "Take all this out of

here and stop turning my Father's house into a market" (Jn 2: 13-17).

Does the re-assuring conviction of the psalmist come through to the worshipper in his dilemma as he agonises over the implications of a commerce-based worship ?

It isn't sacrifices and offerings which you really want from your people. Burnt animals bring no special joy to your heart. But you have accepted the offer of my life-long service. Then I said: "See, I have come, just as all the prophets foretold. And I delight to do your will, my God, for your law is written upon my heart ! I have told everyone the Good News that you forgive men's sins. I have not been timid about it, as you will know, O Lord. I have not kept this Good News hidden in my heart, but have proclaimed your loving kindness and truth to all the congregation" (Ps 40: 6-10).

Is direct personal service and commitment to those around us in material and spiritual need encouraged ? This would foster greater person to person sensitivity and more felt solidarity. Does love for God above need to be expressed in gift offerings to his stewards on earth ? While this burdens them with the task of recycling the gifts to the needy, it tends to generate in them an unwelcome feeling of power over the lives of others, proportionate to the quantum being rechannelled.

Does the message of the Scriptures reach us in its questioning of the dynamics within society whereby the surplus is appropriated and continually accumulated ? Whereby some are pauperized and others gain increasing purchasing power with which they can express their love 'in terms of things given' ? The laws of Leviticus written at a time when the generation and appropriation of a surplus was already beginning to divide society, carry a relevant and a thought-provoking message for us today. The year of the Jubilee was the year of 'levelling': bonded labour was released; public and private debts were cancelled; land, the prime means of production, was returned to the original owner. Lending money with interest was taboo. Through these mechanisms it was sought to stem basic inequality deriving from a lack of capital. This scriptural challenge should inspire us to seek a socio-economic system, a form of society, in which ownership of capital is reorganised.

Conclusion

In considering the media, the Puebla Assembly of Latin American Bishops has stressed that the day to day world and events must be illuminated by the light of the Gospel. The shaping influences of sub-systems of society demand careful scrutiny if individuals and

societies are to cease being manipulated by the communication media or politico-economic forces. This capacity for careful scrutiny should be seriously and urgently nurtured in the young, as well as among adults through education for justice.

Do formative influences within the Church, be they formal, non-formal or incidental, do the home and school environments enable us to identify the specific value system generated by our present social order? Will they equip us to define and communicate values consonant with a social order that is truly human, community-focused and need-oriented? The challenge is serious, it is urgent.

To Believe in Jesus. By Ruth BURROWS. London, Sheed and Ward, 1978. Pp. xii-115. £ 4.

The author of *Guidelines for Mystical Prayer* (see VIDYAJYOTI 1977, p. 421), yielding to the pressure of friends who found *Guidelines* too specialised, now writes specifically for lay people. Though she thinks that this new work does not add anything substantial to her previous books, it nevertheless gives new insights into the essentials of spiritual growth and of union with God. God calls all Christians to closest union with him and to total holiness, provided we really pay the price of trusting Jesus "to such an extent that we hand over ourselves to him" (p. xi). The main thrust of the book is generous faith, knowledge of God in Christ, assimilation to him and his cross in total abandonment, up to the self-gift of love. There are beautiful pages on love of neighbour, sincerity to ourselves in truth, and faithfulness to conscience; also on the connection between prayer and the sacraments. The religious who read the book—very useful for them too—may find the pages on religious life lacking somewhat in nuance.

Very little is said here about mystical life proper. For this we are sent back to *Guidelines*. But the high demands made by this book offer the best training for an authentic mystical union, without any danger of illusion. Some may think that the austere ascent proposed here would need the help of some encouragement. But the only thing is to take the challenge seriously, believing that we all are called to the perfection of love. The book must be read in a context of generous self-surrender.

The Living God. By René VOILLAUME. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1980. Pp. viii-117. £ 3.20.

The present work translates into English *L'Éternel Vivant* (Paris, Cerf, 1977). In this volume the founder of the Little Brothers and Sisters of Jesus, in the tradition of Charles de Foucauld, gives a series of eight talks which he delivered at Rome during a meeting of the Little Sisters; but what is said concerns the Christian life of all.

At a time when Christian renewal stresses the liberating nature and social dimension of the Gospel, the author contemplates the active presence of the living Christ and of his Spirit in our hearts and minds, thus answering the present thirst of men for the Absolute and their search for the full meaning of life. "This awareness will make their hope a source of strength for action in the world" (p. viii). Voillaume helps us to realize the concrete significance of Christ for us today, to rediscover the true Messiah in his present life of glory and in the reign of his Spirit.

The aim of the talks is surely to strengthen our faith. In order to meet the objections raised by unbelievers in a secularised world, the difficulties experienced by "natural man", when confronted with a mystery which transcends reason, are frequently stressed. This emphasis may sound apologetic and weaken the impact of a very positive and urgent message. But the humble sincerity with which it is delivered will not fail to strike the readers.

G. GILLEMAN, S.J.

Book Reviews

Reference Work

Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion. Edited by Paul Kevin MEAGHER, Thomas C. O'BRIEN and Consuelo Maria AHERNE. Washington, D.C., Corpus Publications/Sisters of St Joseph of Philadelphia, 1979. Three Volumes, 3815 Columns. (No price given).

Corpus Instrumentorum was formed in Washington as a religious book publishing Corporation in 1966. From that date it has had as one of its projects the present *Dictionary* which it took 13 years to complete under the chief editorship of Paul Kevin Meagher and, after his death, of Thomas C. O'Brien. In his Editorial Preface to the first volume, T. C. O'Brien writes: "Developed under Roman Catholic auspices and inspiration, the *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion* bears the marks of a broad ecumenicity and respect for the human search for truth that were among the noble ideals inspiring and inspired by Vatican Council II. The work's choice and proportion of topics, the choice as well of scholar-contributors to deal with them, aimed at the basic objective of providing faithful and accurate information. . . . The editorial tone of the work reflects a desire to serve the reader's need for information and a convinced respect for the reader's right and power of interpretation in the use of that information." The *Dictionary* has engaged the collaboration of over 500 authors; it contains 25,000 articles, with short bibliographies.

Let one be misled by the title, it should be made clear that the *Dictionary* is, deliberately, primarily concerned with Roman Catholicism; the bulk of the articles is devoted to Christianity in the Catholic tradition, the information about which is truly encyclopedic. Nevertheless, it provides a broad range of information about the Eastern Churches, Protestantism, the Jewish religion, and the major religions of the world, especially as these are related to Christian belief and practice. Some will find this point of view restrictive, and it is true that to the specialists in non-Christian religions the information provided about

these will appear somewhat elementary and fragmentary. One will do well to remember that the *Dictionary* is primarily addressed to a broad Christian readership, in the spirit, however, of openness to other religions, advocated and prompted by Vatican II.

This clarification being made, the *Dictionary* covers almost every conceivable topic, in so far as these have an important bearing on religious belief and practice, with emphasis on philosophy, psychology, sociology, law, politics, history, archeology and anthropology. Modern movements and organisations, and important personalities are also included.

It is the fate of encyclopedic dictionaries to be partly out of date by the time they are published. This one has been in the making for more than ten years at a time of rapid change. Some articles, obviously written in the earlier years, are less up to date, for instance in their bibliography, than others. Figures and statistics are especially vulnerable in this regard. One example: the population of India is given, according to a 1974 estimate, as 586,270,000.

The *Dictionary* is not meant as a short version of the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (17 volumes) in the trail of which it comes. It is at once broader in scope and much more concise. It will provide a wide public with an invaluable source of accurate and concise information on the *realia* of religion. It is especially recommended for libraries of Christian Institutions.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Grace

Liberating Grace. By Leonardo BOFF. New York, Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1979. Pp. xiv-236. \$ 8.95.

A Latin American theologian, who has already several stimulating works to his credit, addresses himself to the topic of grace from the new liberationist perspective. He is quite familiar with the Western theological tradition, and, even while criticising it, makes good

use of its positive insights. He traces three approaches in this tradition. The first, starting from the psychological experience of sinfulness, develops the theme of justification through divine grace. The second studies the subject with the help of Aristotelian categories like substance, accident, quality and habit. The third, which is often adopted in modern treatises, takes personhood and dialogue as the starting point. The author finds that all these have neglected the social aspect of sin and justification. He wishes to develop a new approach taking social and structural realities as the starting point.

In the greater part of the work, grace is understood in the broader sense of whatever is gratuitous and graceful in human experience. This is opposed to what is dis-grace or what is alienating and oppressive in society. The author rightly remarks that we cannot neatly identify realities that are grace and dis-grace since they often co-exist in the same situation and in the same class of people. There is no stratum of people who are so oppressed that there are not elements of grace in their life. In fact, due to the universal salvific will of God, grace is an universal and all-pervading phenomenon. But it is not a thing but the very presence of God realising his salvific purpose in spite of the most sinful and alienating structures. Grace is constantly experienced as faith, hope, love, friendship, peace, joy, a critical spirit, courage and humour. These more experiential reflections lead the author finally to consider grace as sharing in the divine nature, divine filiation, participation in the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of the Trinity. Here he freely draws on traditional theology, both Greek and Latin, although he expresses himself with charming freshness.

In the last mentioned considerations there is little of the liberationist perspective. It seems that the author here is dealing with grace in the stricter sense as divinization so that there is no real opposition between the traditional approach and the new one. Liberation theology can certainly provide a valuable complement to the traditional exposition by going deep into the structural nature of alienation in man and the process by which God liberates or 'graces' man and especially human society. Although the work is presented as a radical breakthrough in the theology of grace, in the end it turns out to be a synthesis between traditional and new elements, which is all to the good.

On the whole, the author displays much erudition and remarkable accuracy in presentation. Occasionally, however, one may notice a less felicitous expression such as characterising the divine indwelling in the just as 'subjective' (p. 210). At times he also makes very free use of traditional formulations as, for instance, when he applies the qualifications of 'distinct, immutable, indivisible, and inseparable' to the union of the person of Christ to individual human beings (p. 190). We may welcome this work as a valuable contribution to liberation theology, and also to the renewal of the treatise on grace. It is likely to attract all those concerned with total human liberation.

G. LOBO, S.J.

The Experience and Language of Grace.
By Roger HAIGHT, S.J. *Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1979. Pp. 186. £ 3.95.*

R. Haight, of the Jesuit School of Theology, Chicago, publishes introductory essays prepared for a basic course on the theology of grace, taught at the Loyola School of Theology in the Philippines in 1973-75. The course consisted of a close reading and discussion of some fundamental texts from the history of the theology of grace. The present essays supply the historical, cultural and doctrinal background of the few authors chosen for study: Augustine's Grace and Human Autonomy; Aquinas' Nature and Grace; Luther's Sin and Grace; K. Rahner's Grace and History, and the Council of Trent on Grace and Justification.

The essays are concerned with what Fr Haight calls the "experience" of grace, which includes personal experience and cultural categories, and the "language" of grace which includes, besides word-symbols, systematic concepts that render the meanings coherent. The essays are not meant to substitute for a more systematic approach to the mystery; nor do they leave out the New Testament theology of grace and the teaching of the Greek Fathers. The comparison they make between vastly different historical thoughts and backgrounds stimulates personal reflection and helps to detect a fundamental continuity below personal differences; it also invites to "inculturate" this core in new cultural contexts. An effort is also made to reflect on "social grace" in the contemporary language of liberation; the context however, is that of "liberationist theology of history", which differs

from the "liberation theologies" of Latin America.

The well informed essays give a clear insight into, and a balanced critical evaluation of the trends they study. Even if one may differ on some readings of the facts, the volume is a valuable contribution to the study of grace. It will prove especially helpful for seminar work, also at post-graduate level.

G. GILLEMAN, S.J.

Two Views on Man

Marx and Teilhard. Two ways to a New Humanity. By Richard LISCHER. New York, Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1979. Pp. xii-174. \$ 6.95.

This is a serious study of the similarity and divergence between the Marxist and Teilhardian vision of man and his destiny. Although the author is passionately interested in the subject, he maintains a calm objectivity throughout. The study is basically on Marxism, its roots in Western Christian thought as well as its repudiation of religion as far as it appears as alienation of man. Teilhard has been chosen as a focus of interpretation, not only for his intrinsic interest, but also because he is a particularly suitable respondent to the religious questions raised by Marx.

The similarities between Marx and Teilhard have been taken note of by those interested in dialogue as well as in anti-communist polemics. Both the thinkers exceeded their specialization through broader and more evocative beliefs about the nature of man and the role he is destined to play at the centre of economic, social and evolutionary processes of development. One of the core principles shared by both is that to be human means to change. Marx sought to design a strategy of political and social change while Teilhard wanted to propose a view of Christianity that would contribute to the making of the new man.

The author first uncovers the Marxian and Teilhardian ideals and postulates. While the two agree on the 'primacy of consciousness', 'faith in life', 'the priority of the whole', Teilhard has 'faith in the Absolute' as the eternal 'Someone'. Marx attributes the characteristics of the Absolute to man himself. This also accounts for the personalism in Teilhard as opposed to the collectivism of Marx.

Then the author goes on to study the origins, nature and shapes of evil in the two systems. In Marx, evil is explained

largely in terms of the alienating and degrading condition of labour in capitalist society. Teilhard saw evil in those manifestations of human life which have not yet attained the culmination of evolution. While the view of Teilhard is much wider and deeper, it suffers from some depersonalization, although less than in Marx.

The next step is to examine the critique of Christianity in the two visionaries. The critique of bourgeois society and the alienating character of bourgeois religion led Marx to an absolute rejection of God, while Teilhard faulted Christianity, not for what it is, but for how it is formulated.

The last study is about the concept of the transformation of man and the end of history in Marx and Teilhard. Both predicted and passionately advocated the historical transformation of human nature. But, since the hope presented by Marx is limited to this world, it appears more as an utopia. The displacement of the absolute Spirit by its self-created successor, man, leads to the advocacy of violence as an exercise in liberty and as an expression of creative interaction with nature. Teilhard believed in a universal law of progress, but based it on the immanent action of the Cosmic Christ, the Omega point towards which all evolution tends, so that there is room in his vision for religious faith and worship. His belief in 'totalization' without coercion may indeed be somewhat naive, but it is an antidote to the too easy advocacy of violence by Marx.

The work can be considered a significant contribution to the study of Marxism from the Christian point of view. However, the thought of Teilhard could have been given more attention. Perhaps the influence of Hegel on Teilhard has been somewhat exaggerated.

G. LOBO, S.J.

Building Community

Community and Growth. By Jean VANIER. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979. Pp. 248. £ 3.40.

"I sometimes tend to behave", confesses the author of this welcome and insightful volume, "as if everyone could live in community and grow through their own efforts toward universal love. With age and experience of community life, perhaps too with a growing faith, I'm becoming conscious of the limitations and weaknesses of human energy, and the forces

of egoism, fear, aggression and self-assertion which govern human life and make up all the barriers which exist between people. We can only emerge from behind these barriers if the Spirit of God touches us, opens the barriers and heals and saves us" (p. 88).

This frank and realistic assessment of his own efforts over the past decade and a half to live and build Christian community with physically and mentally disabled and their assistants might be said to be the heart of Vanier's experience-based reflections. Perhaps "starting points for reflection", the author's own description of his observations and insights, would be more appropriate, for while some of his learnings are developed in some depth, others need to be pursued still further. Vanier leaves that to the individuals and groups who might make use of his experience. The reader gets the impression that little has escaped Vanier's observant eye and sensitive heart in his response to Jesus' call to commit himself to life in community. The result is that his thoughts and observations are bound to strike a resonant chord for many of us who live in Christian communities, either within or without the structures of religious life.

Some months ago, Jean Vanier made another of his frequent visits to India, to visit the *Asha Niketans* in various parts of the sub-continent, which are the outgrowth of his *L'Arche* community movement begun in France and now represented on all five continents. I heard him speak in Calcutta on "friendship" whose role it was, he said, to comfort, confirm and challenge. More important than to idealise friendship (and community) is the effort to forgive differences and to accept one another,

at the same time desiring that each become what he can become, and what God, too, calls him to be. Personal weaknesses can be as much a "gift" to the community as talents and abilities.

Vanier stresses that communities just don't happen; there are certain *conditions* which are necessary for living effectively one's Christian life in community. These he tries to clarify. They include a shared common goal and commitment; proper motivation, including fidelity to the group as well as to God; adapting to the various stages of growth in community; making use of all the means to nourish the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual life of the group; the various gifts essential to community, e.g., leadership, spiritual counselling and discernment; an attitude of "welcome" to others; effective group meetings; day-to-day living; and, finally, true celebration.

Whether the work of Vanier himself or of his translator from the French, new words, too, emerge that shed fresh light on old concepts. One such is "gratuity", said to be essential for community living, and meaning a self-gift, a readiness to put the group before oneself without counting the cost. Another is "welcome", an attitude of "open doors and open hearts" to others, including God.

Neither a treatise nor a how-to-do-it skills book, Vanier's work merits reading and re-reading, for it represents the distilled wisdom of experience informed by true Christian faith. More than that, the book deserves to achieve its important goal, namely to initiate reflection within Christian communities.

J. CURRIE, S.J.

See also pp. 365 and 390

Book Notices

To Be in Christ, by Hubert VAN ZELLER (London, SPCK, 1979, 56 pp., £ 1.25) is a collection of 23 short meditations (2 pages each) on Jesus, Mary and the Saints. The author's intention is to show that the love which animated Our Lord — which is Our Lord — animated also our Lady and the saints; not three kinds of love but one. The same love must animate us.

Lent with St John, by Michael RAMSEY (London, SPCK, 1980, 47 pp., 75 p.) is a collection of short meditations (1 page each) for each day of the Lenten Season, based on the Gospel of John. Though occasional suggestions for prayer are made, it mostly consists in evocations from the Gospel, for, as the author is convinced, no book ever written has a greater power to evoke meditation.

Meditations on the Passion, by Johann Baptist METZ and Jürgen MOLTSMANN (Ramsey, Paulist Press, 1979, 39 pp., \$ 1.75) consists of two meditations by two prominent German theologians, one Catholic and one Protestant, on Mark 8: 31-38. The original texts were coordinated, so as to bring out the common response of both theologians to the demands of the biblical text.

Meditations on the Holy Spirit by K. E. GILL (Madras, The Christian Literature Society, 1979, 83 pp., Rs 3) unfolds for simple Christians the riches of the Holy Spirit from the different books of the New Testament and from Church doctrine. The style is very simple, but systematic and direct.

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We have received from *The Christian Literature Society, Madras*, several booklets on social change and human development. **The Social Ethics of the Lord's Prayer** by Donald W. SHRIVER (1980, 75 pp., Rs 4) consists of four lectures delivered at the 1978 Clergy Conference of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church; it exposes the social implications of the Lord's Prayer, as intended by Jesus himself, and the challenges it places before us in the contemporary situation. **The Gospel, the Church and Social Change** by the same author (1980, 56 pp., Rs 4), is the text of the Abraham Malpan Lectures, delivered by him in 1978. The theme of the lectures is the social implications of the Christian Gospel, and their main burden centres around the Church's responsibility to bring about social justice and peace among peoples. In **The Complex Faith: Naipaul's View of Human Development** (1979, 21 pp., Rs 2), K. I. Madhusudana RAO exposes the view on human development propounded in his literary work by V. S. Naipaul, Indian born but living in the West Indies. Also from *The Christian Literature Society, Madras*, comes **Communism and Christianity** by J. F. BUTLER and Chandran DEVANESEN (1980, 93 pp., Rs 5). This is a second revised edition of a book first published in 1949. Dr Devanesen remarks in his Foreword that, while the world scene has changed since the book first appeared, the classic formulation of Marxism has not undergone radical change. On the other hand, a study of Marxist theory from the Christian point of view is a more and more challenging task as we seek to reflect on and implement the revolutionary aspects of the mission of Jesus Christ in the present struggle for economic and social justice. The book continues to be useful in the present context.

Biblical Reflections on People's Theology, by M. J. JOSEPH (Delhi, ISPCK, 1979, 38 pp., Rs 4), is the outcome of Bible Studies given by the author at a Training Conference of Young Christian Writers conducted by the National Christian Council of India in 1978. The author's Reflections have the authenticity and integrity that come from long involvement in the struggle of the people, especially the poor.

St Paul Publications, Allahabad, have sent us a number of recent publications. **Helping Young People to Know God Better** by R. H. LESSER (1978, 135 pp., Rs 6.25), has its origin in conferences given by the author to religious sisters, but it well deserves to find in print a larger audience. In his usual simple style, the author puts at the disposal of people—he has primarily in mind the catechists—the riches of the ongoing Church renewal. From the pen of J. MAURUS, another well-known author, comes in the "Better Yourself Books" Series **Live a Happier Life: 8 Steps to Succeed in Happiness** (1978, 182 pp., Rs 6). The book is a simple but lively presentation of the Beatitudes. In the same series we have **Logic for All**, by **Richard BODMAN** (1978, 91 pp., Rs 4), a clear, straightforward introduction to logic or the "science of proof". **Poustinia**, by Catherine DE HUECK DOHERTY, has already been mentioned and recommended in our columns (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1977, p. 239). It is now available in Indian Edition from *St Paul Publications, Allahabad*, (1978, 269 pp., Rs 9.50).

You Can Still Change the Word, by Richard ARMSTRONG and Edward WAKIN (Bangalore, *Asian Trading Corporation*, 1979, 118 pp., Rs 10) offers practical wisdom, specific examples, pointed questions, and helpful tips to help people to take another look at their world and at the world. It is a book of faith, hope and love, that blueprints the Christopher way of improving the world through self-improvement and personal growth.

* * *

Look After Yourself by Iain REID and Peter MADDOCKS (London, *Darton, Longman and Todd*, 1979, 90 pp., 95 p.), published in association with the Health Education Council, is a book of humorous cartoons about personal and family health. Packed in it are hundreds of hints and facts on a wide range of health topics. Informative and practical, it has the added merit of helping people laugh—the best medicine!

The Sober Truth by J. Kenneth LAWTON (*Exeter, The Paternoster Press*, 1979, 51 pp., 75 p.), tells the sober truth about alcoholism. The author, who is Secretary of the Churches Council on Alcohol and Drugs in Britain, approaches the problem of intemperance from both a human and a Christian angle.

* * *

The Defenseless Christian Minority in North-East India, published by the Christian Association of Arunachal Pradesh (1979, pp. 30-xxi), tells the "Tragedy of Arunachal Pradesh" and pleads for the recognition of religious and civic rights for the Christian community in that State of the Indian Union.

J. D.

Madras, September 1980

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8. **John de Britto and His Times**: by Albert M. Nevett S.J. The life of the Saint and the history of his Times. 1980 ed. 239 pp. Rs. 15.00.
9. **Jesus the Stranger**: by Joseph G. Donders. The purpose of this book is to enable the reader to know Jesus more intimately, to love him more deeply and serve him more faithfully. 290 pp. 1979 ed. Rs. 75.05.
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15. **Teachers of the Faith: Pedagogical Guidelines for Religious Education**: by Herve Morissette c.s.c. 1980 ed. 350 pp. Rs. 22.50.
16. **My Words Are Spirit And Life: Meeting Christ through daily Meditations**: by Stephanie Herz OCD. 144 pp. 1979 ed. Rs. 33.00.

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A. A. P. Z.
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Sacraments to Married Divorcees

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OCTOBER 1967

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In This Issue

As this issue of VIDYAJYOTI comes from the press the Synod of Bishops in Rome on the Family is in progress. The problems it has to face are many and difficult. We have drawn the attention to some in preceding issues. In the present one Fr Oswald DIJKSTRA writes on the delicate pastoral question of "Admission of Remarried Divorcees to the Sacraments". He shows the diversity of opinions held today by theologians and advocates that firmness on the doctrine of Christian marriage be combined with pastoral tolerance and comprehension. This attitude is based on God's own way of dealing with men in the economy of salvation which must serve as the model of the Church's pastoral action.

The Sacred Congregation for the Clergy published last July an important document pleading for a better repartition of priests throughout the world. Addressed to all the Bishops of the Church, the document is based on the 1977 statistics of the universal Church. It calls for reforms of ecclesiastical structures and a closer collaboration between bishops and religious congregations, within national and regional episcopal conferences, which would result in a more equitable distribution of missionary personnel, thereby assuring a more universal evangelization. The problem is not new and the document recalls efforts made by Pope John XXIII in the same direction, particularly regarding North and South America. Nor is the problem new within India, where an important step has been taken by the creation in the North of Oriental eparchies. In this context, the article of Fr Joseph P. NEELANKAVIL which suggests further spreading the movement will arouse reflection. It is based on sound ecclesiology even if further refinements remain possible on the terminology of the local, individual and particular Church.

In the same context of a better evangelization of North India we welcome also the article of Fr Walter FERNANDES. He shows the various factors, social, economic, political and cultural, which influence the life of the Hindi region and need to determine the Church's evangelizing action. The observations he makes are well worth pondering.

1980 marks the fifteenth centenary of the birth of Saint Benedict. A meeting of Asian monks took place in Sri Lanka last August which emphasised the significance of the event for Asian monasticism. In a short article Fr Bede GRIFFITHS, the well-known Guru of Succidananda Ashram, Shantivanam, shows the special relevance of Saint Benedict for India where various religious, spiritual and monastic traditions have begun to meet and interact.

Admission of Remarried Divorcees to the Sacraments

Oswald DIJKSTRA, O.F.M.

THE literature on admission of remarried divorcees to the sacraments, which is already quite extensive,¹ will continue to grow as the Synod draws nearer. It reveals a definite trend towards change in the current practice of the Church. In conformity with this trend local synods and associations of theologians and jurists have called for a new pastoral approach.² This call is heard not only in countries like France, Germany and America, but also in those of the third world like South Africa³ and East Africa.⁴ In India the National Consultation on the Family (Madras, 28-30 July 1979) pleaded that in the case of remarried divorcees "local authorities should explore the possibility of granting their admission to the sacramental life" (n. 50).

The purpose of the present article is to examine and evaluate the nature of this call and the reasons brought in favour or against such a change.

Listing the Arguments

The reasons for or against admission of remarried divorcees to the sacraments reflect three different approaches as they either support the current practice, or favour a change in the practice as well as in the teaching on divorce, or plead for pastoral tolerance while accepting the teaching.

1. The traditional and till now the official approach insists on a clear choice on the part of the remarried divorcees between renunciation of the second marriage and withdrawal from full participation in the sacramental life of the Church. Recently the Italian Episcopal

1. Charles E. CURRAN, *Ongoing Revision in Moral Theology*, Fides/Claretian, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1975, pp. 67-70.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 70-75.

3. Report of the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference in preparation for the 1980 Synod, Part IV.

4. Report of the AMECEA (Association of the Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa), Consultation on the Family in Eastern Africa (11-28 February, 1980), Part I, sub 3, 2c.

Conference (CEI) in a document on "Apostolate in Irregular Marriage Situations" defended the traditional practice on the following grounds:

a. The Church can grant no forgiveness without a firm purpose of amendment on the part of the sinner, i.e. discontinuance of the unlawful union; without forgiveness there can be no admission to the sacraments.

b. It is not possible to receive in a worthy fashion the Holy Eucharist as the sign of perfect unity when one's own condition of life creates and maintains a break with Christ and the Church.

c. Non-admission to the sacraments is not a punishment, but is prescribed by a love that remains faithful to the truth.

d. If pastoral practice were to allow legitimate married couples and remarried divorcees to mix in the celebration of the sacraments, the faithful would come to look upon divorce less as an evil.⁵

2. That this fear (1-d) is not altogether groundless is clear from the second approach. Charles E. Curran openly states that there are different reasons for asserting that a change in pastoral practice does not go far enough and ultimately there should be a change in the teaching on indissolubility itself.⁶ The present change in practice is in itself already a "sign of the times". The new understanding of Scripture (appreciation of the role of the Church in the formation of the scriptures may clear the way for a more liberal interpretation of the teaching on divorce), the new historical consciousness (making theologians sensitive to historical developments in the field of marriage and family life), the new personalistic understanding of marriage (marriage is more than an institution) and the importance of eschatology (the fulness of perfection comes only with the eschaton) are arguments which, taken cumulatively, will lead the Church towards a change in her teaching. In fairness to the author it must be mentioned that he "recognizes the great importance of impressing on Christian people the fact that indissolubility remains the imperative goal of every true Christian marriage".⁷

3. The third approach accepts the absolute teaching of the Church on the indissolubility of marriage, but pleads for pastoral tolerance of second marriages after divorce, including admission to the sacraments under certain conditions. This approach combines firm adherence to the teaching of the Church with sensitiveness on the part of the pastors to the stirrings and manifestations of faith in those

5. CEI document on "Apostolate in Irregular Marriage Situations", *Indian Missiological Review*, Vol. 2, n. 1, pp. 71-83.

6. Op. cit., p. 76.

7. Op. cit., pp. 75-76.

who culpably or inculpably have drifted into a situation of conflict with the Gospel and the Church. The reasons, found in many and diverse articles may be summarized as follows:

a. The Church has the duty to help all the baptized to live the life of the children of God.

b. There are remarried divorcees who are convinced that they are not in a state of sin on the ground of some conflict they are unable to solve (e.g. obligations towards husband and children of the second marriage). Others have drifted into divorce without sin on the part of the parties involved. Again others believe that their first marriage was invalid though they are unable to prove it.

c. The Church must respect the right of the individual to act according to his conscience.

d. The Church does already allow people in a second marriage to live together as brother and sister.

e. The Church should be a sign of forgiveness; divorce is not an unforgivable sin.

f. Priests and religious are dispensed of their vows, yet remain in full communion with the Church.

g. Public opinion about what is scandalous has changed.

h. Certain conditions for admission to the sacraments ought to be fulfilled.

We will now examine the nature of God's economy of salvation and the pastoral attitude that goes with it. Then, in the light of this reflection we will evaluate the reasons for and against admission of remarried divorcees to the sacraments. Finally — if the answer is in the affirmative — under which conditions should they be admitted ?

God's Economy of Salvation and Pastoral Tolerance

By God's economy (*oikonomia*) of salvation we understand God's free, sovereign and transcendent activity by which his universal salvific will is realized in the history of man first and foremost through the Incarnation (continued in the Church), and further in any way he may choose in his wisdom and freedom to bring all men to the knowledge of the truth.

A first and important point is the fact that God's salvific will is truly universal. He wants *all* people to be saved. Nobody should underestimate the ardour and determination of God to save his people. The sufferings and death of his Son show to what lengths God is prepared to go. Forgiveness and redemption lie at the very heart of

God's salvific relationship with man. The ardour of God to save people should be matched by a sensitiveness on the part of pastors to the stirrings and manifestations of genuine faith in people who belong to the Church, or are outside the Church or live in conflict with the Church.

Secondly, God's salvific will is directed towards the individual *as he is*, not as a case of the universal. "I have called you by your name, you are mine" (Isaiah 43, 1), and "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations" (Jer 1, 5). Whether he addresses himself to Israel, Jeremiah or any other person, God calls them *by name*. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, incarnated in Christ, reaches out to man in his concrete, individual and unique existence and evokes a response enriched with all the shades and nuances of his existential reality. Salvation is a unique and irrepeatable event which unfolds itself in the dialectics of love between the God who is and the person whom he calls by name.

Thirdly, God has progressively adapted his saving activity to the demands of the concrete, historical situation of man. First he revealed himself through creation and allowed his salvific will to be spelled out in the articles of the natural law. Then he concretized the law by revealing his will in his selective dealings with the chosen people, who in turn wrote it out in the Thora. Finally he sent his Son as "the way, the truth and the life", as the primordial sacrament of salvation. But even the Incarnation has its limitations of space and time. God's salvific will can never be concretized to the point of being absolutely clear in its demands in every imaginable situation of each individual person.

In the light of the universality of God's salvific will, the uniqueness of the human person and the limitations of the law and the sacramental system, God's redeeming activity must be understood as a mystery of freedom and transcendence which cannot be fully spelled out in universal propositions and general norms, nor be confined to the sacramental system, but also operates through the Holy Spirit who dwells in the heart of man. No universal law can cover all the concrete, possible ways of acting that may be morally binding on a person, nor can the conditions for a worthy reception of the sacraments be formulated so as to do justice to the inner disposition of man. In the subjective sphere of the existential relationship between God and the individual there is an area where the force of the law loses its strength due to lack of clarity and where the Holy Spirit takes over to guide man to salvation. This is the area where man ought to

follow his conscience. The function of conscience is not only to apply universal laws to individual situations, but also to be sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in choosing between possible ways of acting that lie beyond the reach of the law.⁸

Eastern theology has always insisted on defending the freedom, sovereignty and transcendence of God who tolerates no limits to his desire to save man. God is not only a God of law and order, but also a God of infinite ingenuity, who is never defeated by man's sins nor limited in his possibilities of saving him.

Theologians in the West have been more inclined to stress the importance of the law and the sacraments as the operative field of God's redeeming activity. Hence their efforts to stretch the reach of the law as far as possible by help of the so-called "moral systems" (probabilism, *aequi-probabilism*, etc.) which were designed to solve doubts regarding the application of the law with the help of some juridical principle. Yet they too had to acknowledge the limitations of the system by introducing the distinction between the *forum internum* and the *forum externum*, thereby admitting that man's choice of action, though externally in conflict with the law, may yet be justified in the eyes of God and before his conscience.

Today theologians seem to have become more appreciative of the uniqueness of God's salvific relationship with man. There is a notable aversion to any form of institutionalism which threatens to treat man as a case of the universal human nature so as to better ensnare him in a web of laws and regulations. The shift of interest from human *nature* to the human *person* helps us to better appreciate Saint Paul's preference for the individual faith in Christ over the universal Thora as the medium of salvation. In this context the demand of theologians for some measure of freedom for personal, conscientious decisions in the case of a "conflict of values" becomes significant.

In brief, salvation must be understood as the work of the *triune* God. Central is the mission of Christ, who — as God incarnate — is "the way, the truth and the life", the primordial sacrament of salvation, which is continued in his Church. But with the incarnational aspect go also the unavoidable limitations of space and time. Therefore, the redeeming work of Christ and the Church must continually be seen as a mission entrusted by the Father, who is God transcendent, sovereign and free, never hindered in the ardour of his redeeming love by the limitations of the law and the sacramental system. This

8. K. RAHNER, *Theological Investigations*, Vol. II, Baltimore, 1963, pp. 217-223.

personal and private dimension of God's salvific relationship is entrusted to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son and dwells in the heart of man. The understanding of salvation as the work of the triune God should lead to the recognition and appreciation of that purely personal and private dimension of God's salvific relationship which lies well beyond the reach of the law and the sacramental system, yet within the sphere of influence of the Holy Spirit.

Such a recognition would call for a kind of pastors who, being themselves filled with the Holy Spirit, remain faithful to the primacy of Christ's mission and the teachings of the Church, yet are tolerant and sensitive enough to discern the responses of faith to the Father's transcending love in those who culpably or inculpably have stumbled into a life of contradictions and moral conflicts. Such pastoral tolerance is not a cheap device for covering up moral permissiveness, but a helpful attitude of a discerning pastor to a person who is at odds with the institutional Church, yet continues to belong to the Church as a community of believers.

Evaluation

We must now consider how the understanding of God's economy of salvation and the matching pastoral attitude of tolerance and sensitiveness to the stirrings and manifestations of genuine faith in persons who culpably or inculpably live in a situation of conflict with the institutional Church, helps us to evaluate the nature and rationality of the three approaches to the problem of admission of remarried divorcees to the sacraments.

1. We recognize and attach *primary* importance to the role of Christ and the Church as the primordial sacrament of God's plan of salvation. Marriage is part of this primordial sacrament. From the beginning marriage as an earthly reality had the potentiality of becoming the effective sign of the dialectics of love between God and man (Gen 2, 24). The Old Testament progressively revealed that marriage was intended to be such a sign. Then came Christ who proclaimed the indissolubility of marriage with an absoluteness that startled even his apostles. Christ's absolute assertion of the indissoluble character of the marriage union made the theologians of the 12th century include marriage among the sacraments (indissolubility is not the effect of the sacramentality of marriage, but the reason for its inclusion in the sacramental system). They realised that the unitive force of the salvific grace event which seeks to establish the unity of the Kingdom of God — of which the Church is the present actualization — presses

for unconditional fidelity and indissoluble love between husband and wife. Marriage is part of the sacramentality of the Church so that husband and wife, working at their indissoluble union, thereby help to build the unity of the Church, while the Church as a community of faith strengthens and supports husband and wife to live their married life as a sacrament. If two baptised people, who in virtue of their Baptism are incorporated into the Church and in consequence thereof have the duty to build that Church, enter into marriage, they cannot be faithful to their baptismal vows without promising to live their marriage as a sacrament, i.e. to build the unity of the Church by a loving, enduring and permanent relationship.

Those who believe in the above principles will consider the second approach, which seeks to promote a change in the present practice in the hope of gently leading the Church to a change in her teaching on the indissolubility of marriage, unacceptable. We will refrain from discussing the pros and cons of the indissolubility of marriage as that would take us well beyond the scope of this article.

2. While upholding the primacy of the role of Christ and the Church as the primordial sacrament of God's salvation, one should also recognize and appreciate the ardour of God's redeeming activity overstepping the boundaries of the sacramental system and making up for its shortfalls. Will God reject the child whom a priest refuses to baptize on account of the sins of the parents? How can we deny that God's salvific will is truly operative in the second marriage of a couple who live in harmony, love and fidelity, raise their children in the spirit of the Gospel, pray at home and attend regularly the Sunday services? The arguments in favour of the first approach seem to fall short of such appreciation.

a. The document of the Italian Bishops clearly states that remarried divorcees are in a state of life which conflicts with the Gospel of the Lord and that they cannot be sacramentally forgiven as they lack "the resolution for conversion and repentance owing to the continuation of a union which is not in the Lord."⁹ Is this not treating man as a case of the universal? A remarried divorcee undoubtedly finds himself in a situation of conflict with the Gospel. He may also have landed himself there with a good measure of guilt. Now the question is how far his failure to disengage himself from that situation of conflict proves that "the resolution for conversion and repentance" is lacking. At the most we can judge with the help of the law that he continues to live in transgression. But the law completely fails

9. CEI Report, p. 80.

to help us in our moral assessment of the man's interior struggle to extricate himself from this situation. In this subjective sphere, thoughts, ideas, values and emotions conflict, for which no general law can provide a solution.

Let us take an example. Nirmala got validly married to a Catholic boy and happily moved into the house of her in-laws. Soon the in-laws began to make life difficult for her, complaining about insufficient dowry and demanding extra money from her family. Her husband is unable to stop the harassment. In despair she runs away, never to return. Since she has no qualification for a career to earn herself a living and refuses to remain dependent on her family forever, she marries again. The marriage is happy and is blessed with children. Her faith is very much alive: she prays, goes regularly to church, educates her children in the spirit of the Gospel, and she would love to be restored to full participation in the sacramental life of the Church. On the other hand she feels morally obliged to serve her husband and children and return their love and devotion. She has drifted into her present state without sin on her part, and she is convinced that continuing her second marriage is not sinful either as she can't leave her husband and children. Do we do justice to Nirmala by just stating that she lacks "the resolution for conversion and repentance" because she continues her unlawful union ?

Nor do we help Nirmala out of her situation of conflict by asking her to transform her conjugal relationship into some form of platonic friendship by interrupting her sexual life (living together as brother and sister).¹⁰ The heart of marriage is not sex, but the unconditional, unifying, exclusive love between husband and wife, of which sex is an integral part. Abstinence from sex doesn't change the exclusive intimacy of husband and wife into a platonic friendship or a brother-sister relationship.

We are confronted then with a case in which a person lives in conflict with the Gospel, yet displays a liveliness of faith which truly points to the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. On which grounds can the Church, who believes in the economy of salvation as the work of the *triune* God, cling to the law, close her eyes to the promptings and manifestations of genuine faith which come from the Holy Spirit and refuse to respect the conscientious decision of a person in an area that lies well beyond the reach of the law ? The remark of Cardinal Hoeffner (Cologne) that, if the Church took account of such conscience judgements, she would abdicate all control over the

10. CEI Report, p. 81.

reception of the sacraments,¹¹ doesn't seem to apply, as the pastoral tolerance we are pleading for as a fitting response to the particular character of God's economy of salvation, constitutes in itself such a form of control.

b. The second argument in favour of refusing admission to the sacraments, mentioned in the CEI document, runs: it is not possible to receive in a worthy fashion the Holy Eucharist as the sign of perfect unity when one's own condition of life creates and maintains a break with Christ and the Church.¹² Further on the document specifies the argument as follows:

The Eucharist is the sacrament which signifies and realises the fulness of union with Jesus Christ and with his Body. According to the same faith, Christian marriage is the privileged symbol and the accomplishment of that indissoluble pact of love between Christ and his Church which has its highest efficacious sign in the Holy Eucharist. For this reason the Eucharistic communion is equivalent to participating fully in the love which binds Christ the bridegroom indissolubly to the Church.¹³

It is undoubtedly true that all the sacraments are related and integrally united in the totality of the primordial sacrament of Christ and the Church. A non-sacramental marriage breaks up this basic unity and seriously affects its relationship to the other sacraments. The situation of conflict with the Gospel of remarried divorcees will affect their participation in the Holy Eucharist; but will it deprive the sacrament of all its fruitfulness? In the Church of saints and sinners (*simul iustus et peccator*) there are many forms of conflict situations. What about Catholics who regularly receive the sacraments, yet live their sacramental marriage as a purely worldly reality? What about priests and nuns who have been dispensed of their vows, yet live in full communion with the Church? These examples should caution us against pressing too far the Holy Eucharist as the sign of perfect unity.

The Holy Eucharist is also a means of *achieving unity* where it does not exist. Promoters of ecumenism love to quote this argument in favour of inviting Christians of other denominations to a common celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Doesn't this argument favour remarried divorcees as well? Those of remarried divorcees, who with sincerity and sorrow seek the forgiveness of the Church and participation in the Holy Eucharist, will find in the sacrament of unity a helpful means to draw closer to the Church as a community of faith

11. R. A. McCORMICK, "Notes on Moral Theology", *Theological Studies*, Vol. 36, March 1975, p. 103.

12. CEI Report, p. 80.

13. CEI Report, p. 81.

in spite of their conflict with the institutional Church and will derive from this union new strength to live up to the demands of the Christian faith. Thus, in spite of their handicaps, they somehow continue to build the unity of the Church.

3. While discussing the arguments against admission of remarried divorcees as presented by the CEI document, we have also evaluated the arguments in favour of admission and we have found them to have genuine roots in the theology of God's economy of salvation.

Why is it that so many authors are so keen to have a clear cut solution one way or the other: either refusal of admission or a change in the teaching of the Church on indissolubility? Could it be that this attitude of either/or is inspired by an age-old desire to make the Church an effective and smooth functioning institute of salvation? The combination of fidelity to the teachings of the Church and pastoral tolerance seems to me a more fitting response to the peculiar nature of God's economy of salvation, and a more pliable and sensitive method of dealing with authentic signs of genuine faith in people who find themselves in a conflict situation with the Church. To keep it that way and to prevent abuses we must now consider the conditions under which remarried divorcees could be admitted.

Conditions

What are the conditions under which pastoral tolerance will not become a tool of permissiveness in the hands of irresponsible pastors, but will be an exercise of genuine concern for the manifestations of authentic faith struggling to survive in a situation of conflict with the Gospel?

1. The practice should not call into question the teaching of the Church on the indissolubility of marriage, either overtly or covertly, in the hope that a change of practice will lead to a change in the teaching. This follows from what we have said about the *primacy* of the role of Christ and the Church as the primordial sacrament of God's salvific will.

2. The first marriage must be irretrievably lost, and the second marriage with its ensuing obligations must be a living and working relationship. As long as there is a chance of resuscitating the first marriage, the faith of the person should be directed towards revival of the sacrament.

3. If a grave fault is involved in the break-up of the marriage, it should be acknowledged and repented.

4. The second marriage should have proven itself to be a viable and durable union, and the partners should have demonstrated their witness to the Christian faith, so that admission to the sacraments provide solid grounds for the hope that their second marriage may in all other respects be lived as a Christian marriage. Pastoral tolerance must serve the privilege of faith.

5. The partners should have made clear their desire to be admitted to the sacraments.

6. Unnecessary scandal should be avoided. There is truth in the argument that today public opinion about what is scandalous has changed. In case of a threat of scandal the faithful should be educated, rather than be kept in the dark by advising the couple to receive the sacraments secretly in a parish where they are not known.

Conclusion

The Italian document concludes that "non-admission of remarried divorcees to the sacraments does not signify at all a punishment, but only a love which wishes to remain authentic because it is inseparably bound up with truth."¹⁴ The free, sovereign and transcendent character of God's salvific relationship is part of the truth and demands from the pastors of the Church that measure of sympathetic understanding, of delicate sensitiveness and of responsible cooperation, which will strengthen the manifest faith of those who have landed themselves culpably or inculpably in a situation of conflict. Love for the full truth would make non-admission to the sacraments an undeserved punishment.

14. CEI Report, p. 82.

A Mission Policy for India

Joseph P. NEELANKAVIL, C.M.I.*

MISSIONS is the term usually given to those particular undertakings by which the heralds of the Gospel are sent out into the whole world to carry out the task of preaching the Gospel and planting the Church among peoples or groups who do not yet believe in Christ. These undertakings are brought to completion by missionary activity and are commonly exercised in certain territories recognized by the Holy See".¹ So mission work consists in preaching the Gospel and planting the Church.

"The mission of the Church is neither directly nor indirectly a philanthropic, social, cultural or civilizing task. Its aim is not human progress on the human level, but man's salvation. It is not a human task, it is a divine task."² Pope Paul VI wrote that "the purpose of evangelization is...precisely the interior change and, if it had to be expressed in one sentence, the best way of stating it would be to say that the Church evangelizes when she seeks to convert."³ When the Church through the preaching of the Gospel seeks to convert people to Christ and to plant a new local church in a particular area or among a people, we say that the Church does mission work. This establishing the church and helping it to grow to self-hood is the missionary task.

Indian Churches or Rites

In India we have three different Churches based on rites. They are the Malabar Church, the Malankara Church and the Latin Church. As far as hierarchy is concerned all three are independent. In the former two, rite and Church are identified. Hence to belong to the Malabar or Malankara rite means to belong to the Malabar or Malankara Church respectively. On the contrary, one may be a member of the Latin Church, but that does not necessarily mean that he is a member of that Church in India. Thus rite and

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1. Second Vatican Council, Decree *Ad Gentes*, n. 6.

2. Louis and André RETIF, *The Mission of the Church in the World*, Burns and Oates, London, 1962.

3. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, n. 18.

local Church are not necessarily identical. Rite may be considered simply as rules of liturgy. Rite as local Church, however, comprises liturgical rules and observances together with the history, tradition and norms, and style of living of a particular community of people, based on language, ethnical origin, a locality or a special culture, with its own hierarchy. A particular Church is a local Church of a particular people on the basis of language, race, origin, etc. The St Thomas' Christians of Kerala are thus a Malabar rite community. The Malankara rite community is a part thereof, identified as such due to some historical influence exercised upon it by the Anthiochian Church and rite in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which however later became independent of foreign domination and power in the ecclesiastical realm.

Mission work consists in promoting the growth and development of new dependent minor local Churches. What are these minor local Churches? They are, first of all, dependent on a mother Church for their origin, heritage, personnel and financial help. They are minor because they have not grown to the state of self-sufficiency. We may take for example the Hindi speaking area of the Malabar Church in central India, consisting of the few new dioceses of Ujjain, Satna, Sagar and Jagdalpur. This minor local Church has not developed into self-hood. It needs personnel from the Malabar Church and is sustained by the heritage of that Church. The latter tries to provide it with all these as much as she is able and in accordance with its needs. The mother Church, which is well grown, needs in accordance with her nature to beget one or more younger Churches. This evangelization and planting of the Church is mission work.

Like the universal Church, the local Church, be it particular or not, is an organism. It grows from within. It eventually acquires capacity for reproduction. The reproductive power and nourishing capacity are inherent in it, enriching its very being and bringing it to fulfilment. "A Church can be said to be founded in a given area, if she controls her own affairs, has her own churches, her own native clergy, her own means of subsistence, in a word, if she depends on none but herself."⁴ Then is she a full grown Church, capable of taking up missions of her own.

Change of Rite Results in Detriment to the Churches

Change from one rite (local Church) to another has negatively affected the welfare of the missions. We will examine this proposition from two different angles.

4. Decree *Lo Sviluppo*, (May 20, 1923).

Change of rite may be of three kinds. There is first the transfer of one's belonging from a particular Church to another in such a way that one is bound to observe the rules and regulations of the rite (Church) into which one newly enters. This sort of transfer requires permission of the Holy See and is rarely granted. Motives for such transfers are for instance return to one's ancestral rite. "No one can validly transfer into another rite nor after a lawful transfer return to the former rite without the permission of the Apostolic See."⁵

The second type of transfer occurs for example when one enters another rite or particular Church community by marriage, religious profession or priestly ordination. Here one retains one's radical membership of the original rite. But for all practical purposes one comes under the demands of the newly entered Church or rite. There are no specific rules for such transfers. For example, a member of the Malabar Church may join a Latin rite religious order; or a faithful of the Latin Church may get married to one of the Malankara rite; or again a faithful of the Malankara rite may be ordained in a diocese of the Malabar rite. Many priests and religious of the Malabar rite in India have thus joined different dioceses and religious orders of the Latin rite.

The third kind of change of rite consists simply in serving in a Church of a different rite. This can hardly be called a change at all. Numerous are the religious sisters of the Malabar Church, who are thus employed in the Latin Church for rendering service in the missions.

The first two kinds of change of rite may to some extent be inevitable, especially when one cannot find in one's own native rite the type of life and service one wishes to enter. Till recently, with great sacrifice, many Malabarians have joined the Latin Church in the missions, because avenues for mission work in North India were not open to the Malabar Church until 1963. "In the past, the apostolate in the missions has been conducted exclusively in the Latin rite. This practice has been resented by some Easterners, mostly in India where the priests of the ancient Malabar rite were always obliged to adopt the Roman rite to undertake missionary apostolate."⁶

Let us first examine the change of rite from the angle of the individual Churches, such as the Malabar, the Malankara and the Latin. An individual Church, as we saw above, is a living organism endowed with vitality, with power to grow and to produce new

5. C.I.C.O., Can. 8, n. 1.

6. Walter M. ABBOT, *The Documents of Vatican II*, p. 374, footnote.

Churches, somewhat like a human being made up of soul and body, or a tree with life and branches. By the removal of its members, the individual Church suffers a loss of vitality and eventually of growth. By adopting another Church, the separated member suffers a loss of energy in the process of adjustment. This loss is ultimately loss to the Church in general; in India, to the Church in India. Readjusting to a newly adopted Church with regard to heritage is a painful and difficult process, especially when particular Churches or rites possess a rich heritage based on history and spontaneous inculturation. Thus in a change of rite, the Church incurs a partial loss, even if accompanied by a general gain.

From the historical perspective, there are two fast growing missions — local Churches — in India: one belonging to the Latin rite, the Chota-Nagpur Church, and the other, Chanda, belonging to the Malabar rite. The latter is not even twenty years old, and so it is too early to make an assessment of it. The former, however, is fully grown after a century of existence. Both have in general kept to the principle of having missionaries of their own respective rite. Cannot this factor, apart from the conducive missionary climate they enjoy, be a valid reason for their evident growth ?

Only when a particular Church becomes aware of its need and poverty does it develop the ability to produce its own personnel and resources. This self-awareness or realization supposes that only temporary assistance is sought from outside, not indefinite help from other local Churches.

Hence it is clear that rite-indifferentism does not contribute to the mission work and growth of the Church. There seems to exist a misunderstanding even among priests and religious that rite-indifferentism is generosity and large-heartedness. Neither is rite-fanaticism good. Rite is not greater than faith. But those who belittle rite are often ignorant of its constituents: history, culture, heritage, traditions and customs.

It takes almost a century for a local Church to become rite-conscious. But if a particular Church has a well-educated, morally high and cultured community, its rite-consciousness may require less time. Faith has to pass through generations to make a people rite-minded. Rite is rich with history and traditions, and enhances faith. Experience shows that the new North Indian communities need a long time to become rite-minded. The faithful of the ancient local Churches who emigrated to the North Indian regions are, all to their credit, rite-conscious, because they carry along with them their history, traditions,

customs and the like. These have been for a long time in their blood and life, and abide with them inseparably with their faith. Such is the case with the faithful of the Malabar Church, the Malankara Church and the Latin Churches of Kerala, Mangalore and Goa.

Pastoral Ministry and Mission Work

Pastoral ministry is for the faithful. So their heritage, tastes, culture, historical background, etc., must be respected by the pastor. So also their language, liturgy and traditions must be safe-guarded by him. Their rite and legitimate customs must in no way be harmed. Even if the pastor belongs to a different rite or Church, he is bound to adapt himself to the faithful whom he serves. Bi-ritual faculty granted to priests is, as we know, *ad utilitatem fidelium*. Hence it is clear that in the pastoral sphere, the rights of the faithful are more important than those of the pastor himself. The pastor is, however, responsible for eliminating unhealthy and unchristian customs, if any, from among his faithful.

But in the mission field the rights of the missionary stand higher than those of the few faithful, because the object of mission work is primarily the non-Christians who, of course, have no Christian tradition, rite, customs and history. Their healthy customs which do not go counter to Christian morals and teachings may carefully be maintained by the missionary, purified, if need be, from every possible excess. Therefore, the missionary is entitled to carry on his work of evangelization and planting the Church in his own rite, according to the tenets of his own Church and, if he is a religious, in accordance with the heritage of his religious congregation.

If in the mission field the rights of the missionary prevail over those of the faithful, what then is the role of the faithful there? They must co-operate with the missionary. This is true not only of the faithful but also of the religious. This cooperation must go to the extent of limiting their own rights to definite areas and certain occasions. They may even forgo or restrict their claim to having liturgical functions in their own rite, except on important occasions like baptism, marriage, religious profession, priestly ordination and jubilees. It would be unjust on their part to insist on their right and rite, on every Sunday for example, when the missionary is engaged in a long celebration with his new Christians, giving them the necessary explanations and teaching them the faith. It is here that the faithful may contribute to building the Church by way of their sacrifice for the kingdom of God.

Mission Policy for India

For centuries missionaries have been toiling for the evangelization of India with a great sense of dedication, and Indian Catholics have contributed their mite generously to this great cause. Different local Churches of India have been engaged in it. Nevertheless we still have to look for better approaches to the cause. I am here proposing to the Church in India a mission policy for its serious consideration. It is primarily intended for North India, although it is also relevant to some extent to South-Andhra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

1. The existing dioceses may reserve for themselves only that part of their territory which they can effectively evangelize, *Deo volente*, within the coming twenty-five years. They may set aside the rest of the area to be handed over to other dioceses, provinces or particular Churches with sufficient resources in personnel and finance.

Most of the Latin dioceses in the North, except the adivasi centres of Chota-Nagpur, are short of personnel of their own. The Latin dioceses or provinces in India that can come to the help of these dioceses are either the Church of Goa or of Mangalore. The Latin Church of Kerala has little or nothing to spare. Vocations there are dwindling. Unless a concerted effort is made, it may even reach a stage of dependence on other Churches, v.g. the Malabar or the Malankara Church. Already today its religious vocations come to a good extent from among the Malabar Church community.

Earnest effort and wise planning can meet the dire need that is being felt in Northern dioceses. However, to do full justice to the missionary task in the North by importing from the three Churches of Kerala, Goa and Mangalore seems for the present and in the near future, almost impossible. The alternative of inviting missionaries of the Latin Church from abroad is neither viable nor advisable for the Church in India.

So the Malabar Church, now rich in missionary vocations, may be asked to shoulder this responsibility. The vitality and missionary impetus of the Malabar Church are evident from statistics. It provides the Indian Church with a number of missionary bishops, with many priests, religious brothers and sisters; not a few dioceses of the Latin Church in the North also have large numbers of lay faithful from the Malabar Church.

Leaving and taking up parts of dioceses for missionary work involve great sacrifice for the Latin and Malabar Churches, respectively. But it is a sacrifice worth making for the welfare of the Indian Church and missions.

2. Those Churches which can contribute to the missionary task may take up 'uncultivated cultivable land' for mission work, trusting their resources and personnel. They have naturally to pool their forces both in personnel and finance, doing away with unprofitable or obsolete services now being rendered in various fields. Thus for example the educational apostolate of the Church in Kerala may well be supplied by handing it over to an elite laity under the guidance of the hierarchy. Priests and religious men and women, now engaged in this apostolate, can find more challenging fields in the missionary North.

3. In the process of evangelization the following three principles may be adhered to:

(a) The giving and receiving of areas for evangelization shall be motivated by a genuine spirit of love for the Church. Hence it must be done irrespective of the difference of rite. Dioceses of the Latin Church must be prepared to give over part of their territory to a Church of a different rite, and vice versa. As things stand in the North, the Latin Church will be the giver, a generous giver of course, and the Malabar Church of the South a humble and grateful receiver. Accepting facts is Christian !

(b) The particular Church or diocese which receives an area for evangelization must be confident, trusting in God, of developing it with its personnel and resources. So also the diocese which gives away part of its territory must feel sure of eventual progress in the hands of the new agency. This is important because only then will the Sacred Congregations concerned be able to consider the matter positively. We will do well to remember that the giving and taking that took place in the recent past among a few dioceses of different rites was rewarding enough.

(c) Conditions may have to be laid down under which to cater to the needs of rite-conscious communities existing in the area at least on certain important occasions. Here a spirit of generosity has to be fostered both by the missionary and the faithful. All will aim at building the local Church and not their own communities.

Finally, giving away and parting with a section of a diocese surely implies kenosis. But accepting to take it over and to spend resources on it also does. For the aim is that a new local Church be established and that, growing into selfhood with its own heritage, it may eventually become independent of the mother Church. "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12, 24).

The Hindi Region

Situation and its Implications for the Church

Walter FERNANDES, S.J.

LIKE Jesus Christ himself who was born in a given culture and adapted his mode of communication to it, so also the Church, his sacrament in the world, must work within the limitations of a local situation. This paper hopes to help towards the understanding of the situation in the Hindi Region. It is not meant as an exhaustive survey but will provide a limited analysis of the main elements which influence the Church in the North. We shall first discuss the main factors that have influenced the social, economic, political and cultural life of the area, and go on to mention those that have formed the Church. Finally we shall try to discover the link between the two sets of elements, and end with a reflection on its implications. Only Part I will be dealt with somewhat in detail.¹

1. The Situation in the Region

Historically the development of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh has been somewhat different from that of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and the North-West. Rajasthan in particular (and MP to a limited extent) has felt much less than the other States the presence of the Muslims. It has been, through the ages, the referral point of the Hindu kindgs. A genealogy linking a king to the Rajput rulers has very often been a legitimising factor whenever a Hindu ruler conquered a throne anywhere in India. Both in the Muslim and British age, the Rajput kings came to a collaborative arrangement with the rulers in Delhi and retained both their throne and limited internal autonomy. The tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh too have been under rajas for many centuries.

One result of this situation is that these States have felt much more the influence of the Zamindars and of feudal elements, but much less that of the Brahminic groups or the Hindi-Urdu controversy which took a religious turn.

1. An earlier version of this article was presented as background paper at the Hindi Regional Bishops' Conference held at Patna, March 7-10, 1980.

Uttar Pradesh, the North-West and to a great extent Bihar, have lived through much greater non-Hindu influence than the rest of the region. UP and the North-West have been the longest under the Muslims while parts of Bihar came under the British at a somewhat early stage. But, except for opium from Rajasthan, by and large the British did not use this region for commercial purposes, but only as an area of political control and tax collection. As a result, British education did not spread in this region since the colonialists did not require many educated persons from there. They had already identified the Bengali Brahmins, the Tamil Brahmins and groups from around Bombay as the best administrators. Even in Bihar the dominating administrative positions were held by Bengalis. UP being last to come under British rule, the former dominating groups retained their position of influence. The Kayasthas and some others from the Maithili region joined the administrative and judicial systems. But the British required this region mostly for their armed forces. The Rajput and Sikh regiments are well known.

Apart from the fact that British education spread much less here than in other regions, another result of these developments is the type of cleavages existing in the region. Very few religious or nationalist, or even caste or tribal movements have started in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. In the other three areas, on the contrary, language and religious movements have served as the symbols of identity of various groups. Similarly, there have been tribal movements.² These three aspects have special relevance to the Church in the region. A major post-independence change has been the weakening of the zamindari relations and strengthening of the middle level land-holding castes. This is an important factor to bear in mind since it has repercussions on the Scheduled castes. In other words, many changes in the region have adversely affected the tribals and the Scheduled Castes who form the majority of Christians.

The main cleavages in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab and Haryana concerned language and religion. In Uttar Pradesh, the Hindi heartland, interaction was mostly between Hindus and Muslims and between the languages that represented them. There are also caste/tribe cleavages, but these are limited to areas where British or missionary intervention has been greater, as in Bihar and Punjab.³ They have taken a new turn as a result of the post-independence strengthening of the middle level castes, the reservation of seats and industrialization.

2. Joseph TROISI, *Tribal Religion — Religious Beliefs and Practices among the Santals*, Delhi, Manohar Book Service, 1978, pp. 33-37.

3. John C. B. WEBSTER, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, Delhi, Macmillan, 1976, pp. 62-67.

A. *The Language/Religion Cleavage*

One school of thought maintains that the Hindu/Muslim cleavage was inevitable because of the differences existing among them. The colonialists concentrated on this "objective" difference between the groups, while the Hindu nationalists tried to present India as one nationality. The westernized elite, especially, made it their aim to turn the many nationalities into one, co-extensive with India.

While it is unnecessary to go here into details, it is important to bear in mind that cleavages between groups are not caused merely by objective differences between them but also by the subjective consciousness of each as a separate entity. Communal problems arise when a group becomes subjectively conscious of its own identity and of its differences from the others. Symbols that bring the group together are used to give it a subjective identity. Under certain circumstances these symbols and myths may turn out to be factors that divide the group from others, thus leading to a conflictual situation. In other words, objective cleavage becomes subjective.

This is what happened in Muslim-Hindu relations in UP and led to the strengthening of communal elements, particularly the RSS. The turn of the century witnessed a religious revival, both among the Muslims and the Hindus. But that in itself would not have led to any conflict.

a. Unfortunately, just at that time, the nationalist movement was also beginning and the two merged into one. Free India came to be viewed as Hindu India both by Muslim and Hindu nationalists. Thus what had started as a religious revival against the devaluation of their culture by the British, became a factor that slowly separated them. Revival involved among other things going back to their past glory. This was bound to be a separating element because their past was one of struggle *against one another*.⁴

b. The British institutionalised the objective differences that had not yet entered the subjective consciousness of the groups, by giving them separate representation when the consultative assemblies were introduced at the end of the last century. This would be one of the factors leading to group consciousness, further strengthened after the introduction of separate electorates.

c. Language and religion became the symbols of this separation. Hindi began to be considered the language of the Hindus, while the Muslims revalorized Urdu. In practice there was very little difference

4. K. P. KARUNAKARAN, *Religion and Political Awakening in India*, Meerut, Meenakshi Prakashan, 1969, pp. 51-72.

between Urdu and Hindusthani except in their script. But because of this revival based on religion, and of its link with nationalism, the two groups started a process of deliberate separation between the two languages, at least in their literary form. Even today they remain close to each other in their spoken form, but literary Hindi has been sanskritized while Urdu has been persianized.⁵

d. Because of this identification between religion and language, part of the political process in UP and Bihar revolves round the place of Urdu as a second State language. Political rivalry and communal feelings are often interlinked and "there is a continuum from political rivalry leading to communal riots to political rivalry feeding on communal riots".⁶ Thus after the 1967 Ranchi riots, sections of the ruling UP as well as the opposition used them as a pretext to condemn the ruling coalition and, if possible, to bring it down, or to try to weaken the opposition by accusing them of instigating the riots. A similar situation was noticed during the 1979 Jamshedpur riots, which are interpreted by some as provoked by the then Chief Minister's rivals.

e. This cleavage is much less in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, is strongest in UP, but has been the most violent in Bihar where local divisions added to its intensity. This State does not have any one mother tongue spoken by the majority of the population. The Maithili movement has failed to get support even in North Bihar. The tribals feel themselves separate from the others. Hindi has worked as the uniting factor but in a limited sense. In fact, the chronic political instability in this State has been instrumental in letting a few persons use the language cum religious issue as the rallying point in the context of the dissatisfaction of the tribals and others brought about by industrialization.⁷

In Punjab and Haryana the cleavage has been between Hindi and Punjabi, written in Gurmukhi. The Sikhs were for a long time ambivalent in their relations with the Hindus. Many of them entered their religion in the national census as "Sikh-Hindu". This lasted till the British who viewed them as a separate community forbade such an identification in the census, thus making a section of the Sikhs conscious of their separate identity. However, for a long time they would continue to view themselves more as distinct from the Muslims than from the Hindus.

5. Selig S. HARRISON, *India — The Most Dangerous Decades*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1960, pp. 101-103.

6. Paul R. BRASS, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, Delhi, Vikas Publications, 1975, p. 265.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-91.

Moreover, the Sikhs were ambivalent in their relationship to the British. While the trans-Jheelum kingdoms are known as the ones that put up the strongest resistance to the British in 1849, the cis-Jheelum Sikh kingdoms at that time aided the British to defeat the Trans-Jheelum kingdoms. They helped again to put down the 1857 rebellion by preventing a link-up between the Bhopal forces (that had already linked up with the forces in Bengal) and those in the Pakhtoon provinces. In other words, they could not go back to a "glorious nationalist" past (except against the Muslims), as the Hindus and Muslims were doing as part of their community building effort. Moreover, they were prominent in the British army.⁸

Consequently, they were able to identify themselves as a community only when the British began identifying them as a separate group, and later when the Arya Samaj started the shuddhi movement of reconversion of Christian, Muslim and Sikh Scheduled castes.⁹ The major event after that would be the 1922-25 Gurudwara Reform Movement when the Hinduized temple priests became identified with corruption and idolatry. The SGPC was founded at that time for the management of the Sikh gurudwaras, and the Akali Dal as its political wing.

However, the identification of the language and its script with the Sikhs started much later, mostly after independence. But, knowing that the government of independent India would not concede a State based on religion, the new leader, Sant Fateh Singh, who took over from Tara Singh, identified the Punjabi language spoken also by Hindus as the distinguishing factor of the Sikhs. The Punjabi Suba was granted only then.

What this all means is that the Sikhs are more conscious of their identity as a group than of their separation from the Hindus. Consequently, though there are religious fanatics among them, it is easier to co-operate with them than with other religious groups.

B. The Caste Content

The religious movement, while not being identified with the caste movement, is linked to it. Two types of caste movement should be identified: the "backward castes" and the Scheduled Castes (and tribal) movements. In the Hindi region, only Bihar has had major tribal movements and the Punjab (and Haryana) SC movements before independence. The other movements in UP and Bihar (or for that

8. Ibid., pp. 278-283.

9. J. T. F. JORDENS, *Dayananda Saraswati — His Life and Ideas*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 161-165.

matter even the Sikh movement) were primarily upper class movements, i.e., of Brahmins and the landholding castes known as the "backward castes".

(i) *The Backward Castes*

Even the "backward castes movement" is to a great extent a post-independence phenomenon. Some state that the Muslim League and pro-Pakistani movement was religious, affecting the whole community. This is far from the truth. The Islamic revival, and later the agitation for Pakistan, arose not from Muslim-majority East Bengal where the Muslims were by and large peasants under Hindu landlords, but in Uttar Pradesh where the minority Muslim landlords were a privileged group. They would have lost these privileges if the British left the place. In the context of the Muslim revival they could present the freedom movement as a Hindu movement that would adversely affect the Muslims. Once a religious turn was given to this agitation, it was not too difficult to get the co-operation of the Bengali Muslims against the oppressive Hindu landlords.

On the Hindu side, the zamindars who would have lost their privileges after a British exit also opposed the freedom movement and co-operated with the Muslim landlords. But the small and middle landlords opposed the zamindars and bigger landlords, and co-operated with the religio-nationalist elements as well as with the Muslim merchants and professionals who opposed the Muslim League.¹⁰ Thus, unlike the Madras and Bombay presidencies where the freedom movement was predominantly Brahmanic and a "backward classes" movement started in reaction to them, in the Hindi region such a movement was not possible, because the dominating class did not belong to one caste. Consequently inter-caste linkage was inevitable.

The post-independence developments that have led to the present situation have to be viewed within this context. Uttar Pradesh where the middle level landholders were relatively strong at independence is also the State where the Zamindari Abolition Act was implemented with the greatest zeal. This is part of the strengthening of the middle level castes, represented by persons like Charan Singh. During the last three or four decades they have grown as a community and have become a politically powerful group. Thus the State that enforced the Zamindari Abolition Act with great zeal has failed to implement land reforms laws that would have affected the middle level castes.

10. Mushirul HASSAN, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India*, Delhi, Manohar Book Service, 1979, pp. 11-23.

Their power strengthened with the Green Revolution, especially in North-Western UP. Slowly they captured power in the States. This also explains the failure of the government to impose agricultural income tax which can be a major mobilization of resources for the country's development. Hence the efforts by the industry-oriented Congress government to put agriculture (and education) in the central list.

What is said about UP holds good to a great extent also about Punjab, and to a limited extent about Bihar. The power of the middle level landholders is clearly seen in Punjab, which is considered the most advanced State in agriculture—to such an extent that two central ministers of agriculture in succession have come from Punjab. The middle level farmers had slowly strengthened themselves even before independence, because the Sikhs who led their revival movement were mostly Jats.¹¹ From that point of view even agricultural progress can be viewed by them as a factor that helps Sikhism.

Though the zamindari system has been abolished, zamindari relations are somewhat prevalent even today in Bihar, where many former landlords, divided among themselves, seem to use communal feelings to create trouble whenever they feel threatened. Feudal relations seem to be somewhat strong also in Rajasthan and MP, though the middle level castes assert themselves.

In UP both the Brahminic communal elements and the middle level "backward castes" want Hindi, but for different reasons. Sections of the "Brahminic" groups and the children of the former landlords were educated in English medium schools. The middle level landholders demand the Hindi medium in the State as well as in the national administration. So do the communal elements among the Brahminic sections. But their aim and interests differ on the language as well as on other communal issues.

When the "Brahminic" sections demand Hindi, they view it primarily as an expression of the "Hindu nation", i.e., as different from Urdu, considered a Muslim language. They advocate a literary, sanskritized language. The "middle level castes" on the contrary speak a much simpler language, not the sanskritized form with communal overtones.

On the other hand, the same landholding groups demand more and more English medium schools, and approach agencies such as the Church to open them. When they find no response, they join together and start them themselves.

11. MARCUS FRANDA, *Small is Politics — Organisational Alternatives in India's Rural Development*, New Delhi, Wiley Eastern Limited, 1979, pp. 231-235.

This may sound paradoxical, but is consistent within the situation. This aspect of the situation needs to be understood by the Church in North India that works under various pressures. On the one hand the landholders notice that the "Brahminic groups" monopolize most jobs. Their own children, who had their studies in Hindi when the post-independence government introduced mass education, could not compete with those educated in English. Hence it was important to create jobs in Hindi if their children were to have a future. In fact, some scholars even think that the reorganization of the States was at least partly the result of pressures from these groups, for they felt that regional languages would never be introduced without it.¹²

On the other hand they feel threatened both from above and from below. They know that even with the reorganization of States, the best jobs and the most remunerative professions require the knowledge of English. Hence, while trying to introduce Hindi as an official language, they make sure that their own children are prepared for a better tomorrow. Since the older colleges and English schools are located in the urban areas where their children meet with greater competition, they try to get more English medium schools in smaller townships and, if possible, even in the rural areas. The growth of colleges in the rural areas is another phenomenon. Some think that malpractices in the examinations started when these colleges became University "degree mills".

They need English also because they feel threatened from below, i.e., from the Scheduled Castes who have jobs reserved for them. They try to overcome this competition partly by equipping their children with English education, while imposing Hindi education on those who can afford only free education, partly by agitating against the reservation of jobs for the SCs or for the same reservation for themselves, i.e. the "backward castes".

(ii) *The Scheduled Castes*

Unlike in other parts of India, there were very few Scheduled Caste movements in the Hindi region before independence. Punjab and Haryana are the only States to have known some, mainly because of missionary activity. The Protestant missionaries as well as Sikhs and Muslims, all of whom preached equality, met with success among the low castes. In fact Pakistani Punjab was converted to Islam not during the Mughal era but at the turn of this century. Indian Punjab was converted to Sikhism at the same time. This put the upper class Hindus on the defensive.

12. S. HARRISON, op. cit., p. 101.

The Arya Samaj was formed as a reaction to conversion movements, for it was realized that these movements were not a purely religious phenomenon, but part of the low caste effort to free themselves from their oppressive state.¹³ They were prepared to join any group that offered them equality. It was precisely because Christians preached equality that B. R. Ambedkar once planned to join Christianity but he gave up the idea when he realized that caste persisted even after conversion. Christians maintained the caste relations intact and only viewed the conversion movement as upward mobility within the same system.¹⁴ The absence of any caste movement should probably be viewed as one of the reasons, though not the only one, for the paucity of conversions in Rajasthan.

In Bihar there were tribal movements in the last century as a result of the introduction of the zamindari system and the consequent loss of land. The missionaries who realized that the tribals' culture, religion and social relations were closely linked to the ownership of land, fought for their rights, and as a result many were baptised.¹⁵ Chaibasa district which was not much affected by the zamindari system had no tribal unrest in the last century. However, when the Jamshedpur industrial complex was built, the tribals who were the weakest section in the district felt its ill effects and reacted. That is also the time when many conversions took place in the district.

On the other hand, consciousness of denial of their rights and the consequent unrest was not possible among the STs and SCs of MP and Rajasthan till independence. The special privileges seem to have changed the situation considerably, at least among the SCs. Though most studies have limited themselves only to them, through analogy one can assume that some, but not all their conclusions hold good also for the STs. One result of the reservations is that a small elite was educated in "inverse discrimination". While some studies show that this new elite has created a vested interest in the reservation and has led to reduction among the "backward castes" who feel threatened by the reservations to SCs,¹⁶ other studies (Isaacs for example) assert that the progress the SCs have made since 1950 would not have been possible without the privileges.¹⁷

13. Ursula SHARMA, "Status Striving and Striving to Abolish Status — The Arya Samaj and the Low Castes", *Social Action* 1976, pp. 219-226.

14. B. R. AMBEDKAR, *Annihilation of Castes*, Jullundur, Bheem Patrika Publications, 1969.

15. Fidelis D'SA, *Crisis in Chotanagpur*, Bangalore, Redemptorist Publications, 1975, pp. 107-138.

16. SACHCHIDANANDA: *The Harijan Elite*, New Delhi, Thomson Press, 1977, pp. 163-167.

17. Harold R. ISAACS, *India's Ex-Untouchables*, New Delhi, Asia Publishing House, 1965, pp. 91-98.

One consequence of the emergence of a small minority aware of its rights is that the "backward castes" that started their quest for political power around independence felt threatened. Studies have shown that if the middle castes have to acquire greater power or retain what they already have, they are bound to keep the Scheduled Castes and other weaker sections under their total control, for fear that their education and organization would deprive the "backward castes" of the possibility of acquiring political control and economic power in the region.¹⁸

This play of interests between the "backward castes" and the Scheduled Castes should be considered a major (though not the only) cause of the many atrocities committed on the Harijans. One can expect them to increase during the next few years, since there are signs of a green revolution of rice in UP and Bihar. The middle castes control the panchayats, the police, taluk board and district authorities, and win the elections for the State assemblies. Consequently, the victims of atrocities have nowhere to go.

The behaviour of political parties is patterned on the communal issue. Since a long caste war is difficult in most parts of India, they do not encourage it, except when a relatively large group is self-conscious as happened in Marathwada. But they certainly feed on the discontent of the SCs and use it for their own ends. Some parties reflect the cleavages and reinforce them as for example those representing the zamindars, or other landholders. Some (ruling) broad-based parties moderate the conflicts, since they have to get the co-operation of mutually divided groups. Some parties come to a compromise and let the groups co-exist, as did the former ruling party. In other words, political parties do not merely canalize social cleavages, but by using symbols of group identity shape a group consciousness which today has taken the form of the mutually antagonistic backward and scheduled castes.

After the Elections

Some changes have come about as a result of the recent elections. On the one hand, the ruling party at the centre represented during the last two years a coalition of the communal, backward and scheduled castes, since in 1977 the then ruling party alienated all of them. When this ruling coalition broke up, the SC group was the worst affected. The constant contradictions seen in their leader probably also indicate the dilemma the SCs and STs experience (though it would be dangerous

18. Surinder JETLEY, *Modernising Indian Peasants — A Study of Six Villages in Eastern Uttar Pradesh*, New Delhi, Asian Educational Services, 1977, pp. 55-61.

to speak of any one leader as representative of the SCs or STs), since they are lost in the war between the dominating groups. They themselves do not have great strength of their own. In fact, hardly any SC member gets elected outside the SC reserved seats. In other words they are not of much use to the upper castes other than as vote-getters. The SCs in their turn search for security. Studies indicate that most SCs and many STs prefer the more secure government reserved jobs to any other in the private sector where discrimination against them is greater.¹⁹

One major change is in the outlook of the party. As mentioned above, the ruling party at the centre for the last three years was a coalition of various interests. But economy-wise, the faction that upheld the interests of the landholding classes seems to have prevailed while the communal elements were prominent in the administrative sphere. The present ruling party seems to be more committed to the industrial groups, with also a strong landholding base, but gets the SC, ST and minority votes. One result of the industrial bias is that the government will have to adopt strong measures to increase the purchasing power in the rural areas. The urban market has reached a saturation point and production cannot be increased without the additional rural market. Consequently, the rural upper classes may be favoured in some aspects.

Moreover, the difference between the previous and the present ruling party is mostly at the centre. The States were already in the hands of the agricultural groups and their hold on the legislatures is expected to continue even after the State elections.

It is difficult to know its implications for the SCs and STs. The present ruling party presents itself as the protector of the weaker sections and depends on the social and religious minorities in the elections. But it has an important base among the upper and "backward castes". Consequently, some measures may be taken in favour of the weaker sections, such as extra subsidies. But one cannot say with any confidence that measures will be taken to redress their genuine grievances. Most atrocities on the Harijans are a sequel either to their demand for better wages, i.e., the legal minimum, or oftener meant to put down the Harijan protests against the landlords who use their women according to their whims. At present one does not see how these grievances will be redressed, unless strong groups (like the Church) help them to make their voice heard. If efforts are made to

19. M. GLEN and Sipra BOSE, "Social Mobility Among Untouchables", in G. R. GUPTA, *Main Currents in Indian Sociology*, Vol. III, New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1978, p. 64.

free the bonded labourers or improve the wages of the others, the landholding groups may turn against the economic policies of the government. Hence, the government will probably satisfy itself with legal measures *after* atrocities are committed, with the hope that fear of punishment will work as a deterrent. But the Thanjavur experience has shown us that it is very difficult to get witnesses against the landlords, and it is next to impossible to prove a case against them. That may be a challenge the Church will have to face.

11. *The Church in the Region*

Without going into details, the following points may be mentioned as being more or less common to the Church in most parts of the region.

1. Numerically the Catholic Church is very weak in most States in the region, especially in UP and the States with the greatest political influence at the national level.

2. Socially, most of its adherents belong to the weakest sections, i.e., tribals and scheduled castes. The tribals are both socially and economically stronger than those of SC origin, since they have greater ethnic solidarity and often own some land. But most of the SC adherents once belonged to the category of landless agricultural labourers, and many of them still remain within this group.

3. This had the possibility of making them dependent on the Church, since in some places they were rehabilitated in new villages and to a certain extent helped by the mission to improve their economic situation.

4. Most of the clergy and religious in the region, except in the Chotanagpur area and parts of MP, are from outside the region, i.e., the South and the West. Today one cannot forget the fact that ethnic awareness has entered all spheres of our life and may be present also in the Church at various levels. These ethnic differences can cause certain problems in the region. Domination-dependency relations are not only an international phenomenon but may exist within a country.

5. In this context there may be a tendency to follow the strategy of establishing many English medium schools with the hope that they will be more appreciated by the people since many want to be educated in English. As mentioned above, this may coincide with the aspirations of the middle level landholders.

The conscious motivation for this strategy may arise from the realization of the disadvantages the community has to live with. A

politically and socially weak community whose leaders may be considered outsiders to the region may think of these schools as a link that can help it to "establish and strengthen itself". While thinking of its own good, the community may not always be aware of the unintended socio-economic effects on various communities.

6. The dioceses in the area have made an effort to look after the interests of the Christians. They are better educated than the others of their own group. As a result some of them, tribals in particular, have been able to play a leading role. Many leaders of the Jharkhand movement for example have been Christians.

7. The same cannot be said about those who once belonged to the Scheduled Castes. Though they are better educated than their Hindu counterparts, they compare unfavourably with the tribals. Moreover, they suffer from other disabilities since they do not have job and other reservations as the tribals have. This can add to their dependence unless positive measures are taken to counteract it.

8. Though the region is Hindi, the language spoken by these groups differs from place to place and from that of the higher castes in the same region. Brahminic Hindi is not the same as the backward castes' Hindi which in its turn differs from the SC and ST idioms.

III. Some Implications

1. A first problem can arise from the fact that the Church is numerically weak, that its adherents are socially backward and economically poor and that most priests and nuns are from outside the region. If in order to counteract this disadvantage a strategy of finding strength in opening more English medium schools is followed, its social consequences may turn out to be considerably different from what the Church leaders foresee or intend. The motivation for this strategy is obviously the good of the community. But in the process, without perhaps willing or realizing it, and with their own interests and those of the Church and of their religious order at heart, they may be strengthening the middle level groups who have a vested interest in the continuation of the oppressive state of the Scheduled Castes and tribals. Thus they may be increasing the distance between the powerful and the weak, since English medium education improves the chances of the middle level castes in the context of an economy of shortages where only the most powerful win.²⁰ The decision-makers will increasingly come from among the middle level groups and they will probably develop a vested interest in the continuation of a system

20. J. P. NAIK, *Equality, Quality and Quantity — The Elusive Triangle in Indian Education*, Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1975, pp. 37-38.

where those with money can "buy" good education while the others have to be satisfied with badly administered State schools. For the decision-makers have nothing to gain and everything to lose by improving the standard of schools benefitting the weakest sections.

That is where the Church in the region may have to take a close look at its work, and decide whether it should think only in terms of Christians or of the poorest of the region. If we think in terms of the Christians alone then it may be legitimate to try to educate the small number of Christians in schools otherwise frequented by the rich. But, while improving the standard of the Christians, we may be instrumental in the deterioration of the situation of the weakest sections among the non-Christians.

Opting for the poor need not necessarily mean closing down the schools, but, understanding the needs, adapting them to the aspirations of the people. What most want is not necessarily English-medium education but *fluency in English when they complete their high school studies*. If that is the case, then those involved in education could perhaps reflect on the possibilities of Hindi medium schools under the grants-in-aid system, where new methods of teaching English, Hindi and other languages can be developed in such a way that children who speak Hindi at home and do their studies in Hindi can be fluent in English, Hindi and some other language when they complete their high school. Getting into the grants-in-aid system has got its disadvantages. But if we are really committed to the poorest, this probably is the only way, because only places where free education is offered can be open to the poor. The others too will come there since they are ensured a good knowledge of English when they complete their studies.

One objection raised against this is that many persons coming from the South do not know the local language. Though this is true, one would think that this is where real commitment to the people should be seen. In many regions immigrants from outside the region have learnt the local language. There is no reason why priests and nuns today should be an exception.

2. Apart from developing new methods of teaching language to the poorest, these schools can become catalytic agents in raising the standard of other schools in the region, be they government run or otherwise. They can be centres for training teachers for the other schools, and for organizing various activities for neighbouring schools. The choice to be made here is whether we want to have the best schools in the area or to be the "leaven in the dough". If we choose the former, then even when we change over to Hindi, pressures will

continue on us to admit upper class children since they always want to have the best. If we become the leaven, then we can become instrumental in opening new horizons to many more from among the poor. This would mean that any method we develop should be inexpensive, so that it can be used by teachers in a poor school because it involves no high investment. Obviously this will require serious reflection on the part of decision-makers and re-education of the religious staff for a new approach.

3. There are implications also for our liturgical language. At times there is a temptation to reduce rites, language, etc., to uniformity. Uniformity may involve choosing a language that is not easily understood by many, since it may have to be a compromise between various expressions or even the literary language far removed from popular idiom. There may be a case for pluralism. Choice of a language, be it in education or in liturgy, is choice of a socio-economic class.

4. During the next few years one can expect more laws similar to the Freedom of Religion Bill, though not identical. They may take the form of some restrictions on the scheduled castes and tribes. This is where we may have to learn from our actions at the time of the O. P. Tyagi bill. It is possible that in our reaction to the communal elements that supported this bill we viewed it only as a religious problem and failed to see its deeper social implications. Yet most anti-conversion laws passed so far are feudal in nature. As the middle level castes feel threatened, they try to control the SCs and STs in every way possible. The possibilities of education and economic improvement after their baptism may be viewed by them as a threat to their domination. They try to deprive them of all possibilities of improvement. Consequently, the issue is not purely or primarily religious but one of human rights. Those who are deprived of all scope for improvement, have to acquire their right to live as human beings. As such any bill whose main purpose is to deprive them of these rights or to perpetuate their oppressive state is to be treated not as anti-Christian but as anti-Harijan and anti-tribal. We may have to bring this to the notice of the public, as being a human rights issue. It is true that communal elements favour these bills; but their origin is in the persistence of feudal relations.

5. Though most churchmen feel strongly about atrocities on the Harijans, no official statement has been issued so far, probably for very good reasons. It may be useful to ask ourselves whether the time has come to take a position on this and other related issues and add whatever strength we have to aid them in their struggle for their human right to work for a less oppressive tomorrow.

6. In some spheres perhaps we could go beyond statements and help them to organize themselves to demand their rights, to start with, in the question of the subsidies available to them. Though the law provides for aids like DRI loans from the banks and other facilities from the BDO, very few of these benefits reach the really needy. When they are given, the poor are made to feel that a favour is bestowed on them. They could be helped to organize themselves and to demand these as a right that does not involve bribes. Similarly, though compulsory education exists on paper, very few tribals and Harijans have access to it. There may be much we can do to help them acquire this right.

The Church is weak in the region. But many other groups are interested in these issues. If we as a group make an option and throw our weight by their side, many more will be prepared to work together with us. Many others are already in the field. Dialogue and ecumenism may get a new dimension through our cooperation with these groups in work among the poorest.

Christ is in Our Midst. Letters from a Russian Monk. By Father JOHN. Translated by Esther Williams. Foreword by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1980. Pp. xvi-152. £ 2.95.

Father John (Ivan in Russian) was known under the monastic name of Yakin (Hyacinthos) in the great monastery of Valamo in then N.W. Russia. He joined it at the age of sixteen in 1900. After World War I Valamo became part of the territory of the new Finnish Republic, but after the last war, due to Soviet conquests, was re-introduced into Russia; the monks had to leave in a hurry to save their life. After some vicissitudes, they settled down in altogether different surroundings, yet in a New Valamo, where the spirit and rhythm of life of the old foundation was kept very much alive.

Fr John received the grace of constantly deepening and simplifying his ideal as a priest-monk (in the East the old tradition according to which not every religious becomes necessarily a

priest is always adhered to). Therefore, he qualified as a 'staretz', the equivalent of our 'guru' in India. 117 letters written between 1940 and 1956, addressed to priests, monks, nuns and lay-people, are published here, and the author himself wrote a preface to the collection, under the form of a letter also.

This is spiritual direction, at once traditional and adapted. Most of the basic Christian values are dealt with, often with great insight, e.g., detachment, self-control, humility (one of the major themes), prayer, liturgical life, devotion to the Mother of God. Quotations from the great ascetical and mystical Fathers abound, and one smells much of the flavour of the desert anchorites. The spirituality is not negative, it advocates a strong spiritual quest for the laity on a par with the ideal proposed to monks.

Many of the letters begin with the sentence: "Christ is in our midst". Hence the title — a very appropriate one for a series of letters of spiritual direction.

E. R. HAMBYE, S.J.

Saint Benedict: His Significance for India To-day

Bede GRIFFITHS O.S.B.

THIS year the Church and the Monastic Order keep the fifteenth centenary of the birth of Saint Benedict. What is its significance for the Church as a whole and specifically for the Church in India? The Monastic Order to-day like every order in the Church is seeking to renew itself by a 'return to the sources'. This means, of course, a return to the Rule of Saint Benedict with the new understanding of the Rule, which has come from the discovery that it is largely dependent on the so-called Rule of the Master. But behind the Rule of Saint Benedict lies the whole monastic tradition beginning with the Fathers of the Egyptian desert with its profoundly oriental character, and beyond that lies the Gospel itself, to which every religious order has continually to return. But for a monk there is a further problem when he seeks to return to the sources, seeing that monasticism is not a specifically Christian phenomenon. There were monks in India, both Hindu and Buddhist, centuries before the birth of Christ, and a monk in India to-day cannot ignore this fact. On the contrary, the real challenge to the monastic order to-day comes from a renewed monasticism, Hindu and Buddhist, which is attracting disciples from all over the Western world.

A strong case can be made for the claim that India is the original home of monasticism. There is evidence for the existence of 'munis', or ascetics, in India from the beginning of the first millenium before Christ, and the practice of 'tapas', which included silence and fasting and asceticism in general, was already established. Yoga also, as a method of controlling both the senses and the mind, seems to have had its origin in the Vedic period and is attested in the early Upanishads (c 500 B.C.). Monastic life in the sense of communities of monks renouncing the world and living in poverty, chastity and obedience begins with Jainism and Buddhism in the sixth century before Christ. But it is interesting to note that the early Jain and Buddhist monks like the Hindu ascetics, originally lived as wandering monks, begging their food, and it was only the necessity of remaining in the same place during the monsoon season, which compelled them to build monasteries.

There is evidence that the early Syrian monks were influenced by the ideals of Hindu and Buddhist asceticism especially through contact with Manichaean monks in Persia. Mani himself is said to have visited India and learned from Hindu and Buddhist ascetics (cf. A. VOEBUS, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient*, Louvain, 1958). In Greece Pythagoras, whether he himself visited India or not, seems certainly to have been influenced by Indian thought, since he is credited with introducing community life with the practice of silence and fasting and the use of vegetarian food, together with the doctrine of re-incarnation, all of which are typical of Indian tradition. There is further definite evidence of Hindu and Buddhist monks visiting Alexandria at a later date, so that it seems reasonable to conclude that both Syrian and Egyptian monasticism were influenced by the monastic tradition of India. However, it is not so much any positive influence that matters but rather that the monastic ideal was practically identical in East and West. It is not only that the methods are the same, the renunciation of the world, silence, fasting, control of the senses and the mind, poverty, celibacy and obedience to a Rule and a Master, but that the goal of monastic life in East and West is essentially the same. Saint Benedict requires of a monk that he should 'truly seek God', and it is this search for God, or Quest of the Absolute, as it has been called, which remains always and everywhere the characteristic mark of the monk.

The question, therefore, for the Christian monk to-day is how can this search for God be fulfilled in the world to-day, and what can India and the East teach us in regard to this? There is a tremendous awakening throughout the world to-day to the values of prayer and meditation. It is well known that thousands of young people come every year to India in search of God. They go to Hindu ashrams and Buddhist monasteries, but few find their way to Catholic institutions. Why is this? Is it not that Catholic institutions tend to concentrate on liturgical prayer — the Mass and the Divine Office — or, if they have been touched by the charismatic movement, on some form of group prayer. Even when a direct method of meditation is given in a retreat, it is usually some form of discursive meditation. But what people to-day are seeking is 'contemplative' prayer, or as they prefer to call it, an 'experience of God'. What is meant by this? It is a form of prayer which goes beyond words and images and leads to an experience of the indwelling presence of God in the 'heart', that is, in the depths of the spirit beyond word and thought. There has, of course, been a tradition of contemplative prayer in the Church from the beginning, but in recent centuries it has been largely neglected,

and considered to be the prerogative of a few 'chosen souls'. The result has been that the ordinary priest and nun and even the monk has been content with liturgical prayer and discursive meditation, and has hardly given a thought to mystical prayer or contemplation in the traditional sense.

We need, therefore, as monks and religious to recover the Christian tradition of contemplative prayer, not as a remote ideal but as the experience of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, given to every Christian in baptism, and intended to become an active power in his life in confirmation. But it is here that we have much to learn from oriental methods of prayer. In our Christian tradition there is much supernatural wisdom—the practice of the virtues of faith, hope and charity, of humility, obedience, patience, self-denial, and certain methods of meditation; but very little attention has been paid to the physical and psychological basis of prayer and meditation. But in India an elaborate system of physical and psychological training has been worked out over thousands of years and has evolved into a complete science of Yoga. It is this science of Yoga, which we need to study, considered not merely as a method of physical training (though this is important) but as a method of psychological integration, in which body and soul are brought into harmony and integrated in the ground of the Spirit, where man and God meet.

Saint Benedict transmitted to the West the system of spiritual discipline, which had originated in the Egyptian desert and been developed by Saint Basil in the East and Saint Augustine and other Fathers in the West. This system has been responsible for the growth of monasticism in the West down to the present day. But it would seem that we are now being called to introduce the methods of Hindu and Buddhist Yoga into our Christian tradition. Both monks and lay people in the West are hearing this call, and for us in India it has become an imperative necessity. We have to introduce not only the Raja Yoga of Patanjali with its very precise method of training in meditation, but the whole system of Yoga, including Karma Yoga, the Yoga of work and selfless service; of bhakti Yoga, the Yoga of love and devotion, of which the bhajan songs of India are such a beautiful expression; and the Jnana Yoga, or Yoga of contemplation, the Yoga of Wisdom, by which the human spirit is united with the divine Spirit in the depths of the soul. What this would mean is that a monastery would become above all a centre of prayer and spiritual life, or of 'sadhana' in Indian terms. When I say a 'centre', I mean that it would be a place to which people could come from all parts to learn to meditate and to pray. The traditional monastery is based

on an 'enclosure', by which the 'world' is to be kept out; but in India the ashram has always been a place where people can come for guidance in prayer and meditation and for an experience of God. This is surely what a monastery in India should be, a place where all those people, many of them Christians who have lost their faith, can come and rediscover the meaning of Christian faith by discovering the presence of God within.

In this way the monasteries could, perhaps, become once again what they were in the Middle Ages in Europe, centres of spiritual life for the whole people. But there was another task which was fulfilled by the monks of Saint Benedict in the Middle Ages. They were responsible for transmitting to posterity not only the texts of the Bible and the Fathers, but also those of the Greek and Latin classics. Is there not a similar call for monasteries in India to-day to transmit to the Church in India the treasures of Indian spirituality? This would mean, of course, primarily the classics of the Vedic tradition, such as have been opened to us recently by Father Panikkar's great work on the *Vedic Experience*. But beyond this there are all the riches of the vernacular traditions, Tamil, Malayalam, Canarese, Marathi, Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali and so many others. All these classics of Indian spirituality are the inheritance of the Indian Christian, and we need centres where they can be studied, and not only studied but meditated and assimilated, so that they become the spiritual nourishment of the Indian Christian. It is in a monastery or ashram, that the circumstances should be found of peace and quiet and a contemplative atmosphere which makes such meditation possible.

But we should not give the impression that a monastery is only a place of peace and quiet, not concerned with the problems of the world. The monks of Saint Benedict have a long tradition of work as well as prayer. In India to-day it is through manual work for the support of the monastery that the monks will normally be brought into contact with their neighbours in the villages. In this respect it would seem that the monks are well placed for an important service to the Church in India. We are beginning to realize that our religious orders are almost all centred in the cities and cater for the needs of the comparatively wealthy people who live in cities. But the vast majority of people in India live in the villages, and it is in the country that a Benedictine monastery is normally placed. There is an obvious work to be done in assisting the economic development of the villages in the neighbourhood of a monastery, but perhaps we should rather be thinking to-day of adapting monastic life more to the conditions of the Indian villager. Monasteries, like all religious orders to-day,

tend to adopt a high standard of life far above that of the Indian villager. It is here that the ashram, or small, less organized and institutionalized community of monks, perhaps dependent on a larger community, needs to find a place. A small community of five or six monks can adapt itself much more easily to village conditions, and become a centre to respond to both the spiritual and the material needs of the people. This would be done not so much by giving material help as by assisting the growth of the village through the initiatives of the villagers themselves, so that the monks can retain their essential character of contemplatives, but of a contemplation which is concerned with the basic needs of mankind, which are inextricably both spiritual and material.

Perhaps this may suggest how the monastic order in India could become a force for renewal in the Church and for the development of Indian society. In this they would be faithful followers of Saint Benedict, not by reproducing in the East the pattern of prayer and life which he organized with such success for the monks of the West, but by attempting to do for India and the East what Saint Benedict did for Europe and the West. It would mean rejecting a great deal of the letter of the Rule in order to be true to the spirit. Saint Benedict lived at a particular moment in time when the Roman Empire was coming to an end and a new world was being born. We also are living at the end of an era, the era of European ascendancy, in which the Rule of Saint Benedict in its initial stages played a significant part. What we have to ask ourselves is how can the monastic order to-day answer to the needs of the new world, which is being born to-day, the 'third world' of Asia, Africa and South America? It would seem that the basic principles of the Rule of Saint Benedict still remain valid, the search for God in a community of prayer and study and work, which responds to the needs of the world and the Church. The Holy Spirit has to be our guide as to what to preserve and what to change, but the search is going on throughout the world to-day and the monks and nuns of India have to join in that search to find out what is their calling in India to-day.

Notes

Johannine Community

Stimulated by the fact that "the Fourth Gospel is startlingly different from the other Gospels in its presentation of Jesus and startlingly different from the Pastoral Epistles and the Book of Acts in its view of ecclesiastical realities", the author attempts to reconstruct the life of the early Johannine community. He hopes to show how that community found itself in confrontation with the synagogue and other churches, and how despite sectarian tendencies it still prayed for unity with other Christians.

An introductory chapter exposes the problem and the method of discerning Johannine ecclesiology (pp. 13-24). The problem lies in determining in what sense we can detect a "Johannine community" in the Johannine writings. The method followed consists in reading the Gospel as a key to church life thirty to sixty years after Jesus' lifetime. The letters of Jn are used as a key for countering some of the dangers inherent to the Gospel thought. The Gospels tell us how an evangelist conceived of and presented Jesus to a Christian community in the last third of the first century. That presentation indirectly gives us an insight into the community's life at the time when the Gospel was written. Through source analysis the Gospels reveal something about the pre-Gospel history of the evangelist's christological views; indirectly, they also reveal something about the community's history earlier in the century. The Gospels also offer limited means for reconstructing the ministry and message of the historical Jesus.

In reconstructing Johannine community life Brown posits four phases. Phase One or the pre-Gospel era, involves the origins of the community. The community originated among Jews who with relatively little difficulty found Jesus to be the Messiah they expected. Among them were also followers of the Baptist. The link among them was the Beloved Disciple, the hero of the community; he had been a disciple of the Baptist, and possibly was the unnamed disciple mentioned in Jn 1, 46-50, but not one of the Twelve. Brown discovers a second group of pre-Gospel Johannine Christians consisting of Jews of peculiar anti-Temple views; they had "converted Samaritans and picked up some elements of Samaritan thought, including a christology that was not centered on a Davidic Messiah" (p. 37). This view led to conflict with "the Jews" and expulsion of the Christians from the synagogue. The christology of this pre-Gospel community was centered mainly around Jesus' identity not merely as Messiah but as

1. *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*. By Raymond E. BROWN, S.S. London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1979. Pp. 204. £ 3.50.

Saviour of the world, the pre-existent Word. Finally, Brown finds clear signs of a Gentile component among the recipients of the Gospel. The accession of Gentiles to the Johannine community would involve an interpretation of the original or traditional thought, more relevant to their needs and more appealing to their own background. This adaptation implied a universalistic outlook (cf. Jn 3, 16f).

Phase Two: when the Gospel was written. This phase is characterized mainly by Johannine relations to outsiders. Referring to the introduction of Gentiles into the Johannine community and its concomitant universalistic outlook of salvation, Brown remarks that Jn modifies that universalism by a dualism. As a matter of fact Jn divides the human race into believers and non-believers, those who prefer darkness and those who prefer light. This chapter examines the relation of the Johannine believers to various shades of non-believers and other believers. Brown distinguishes six groups.—A. Non-believers detectable in the Gospel are: 1. "the world", i.e. those who reject the light, Jews and Gentiles alike; 2. "the Jews", who in various places, in and through their synagogues, remained hostile to the Gospel; 3. the adherents of John the Baptist who did not follow Christ and who possibly or probably remained in conflict with the Johannine community.—B. Other Christians detectable in the Gospel are: 1. the crypto-Christians, viz. Christian Jews within the synagogues, who by not publicly confessing Jesus were showing that they really did not believe in him; 2. the Jewish Christian Churches of inadequate faith (Jn 8, 31 and possibly Jn 10, 12), among whom could be "the brothers of Jesus" mentioned in Jn 7, 3-5; 3. the Christians of Apostolic churches represented by Peter and other apostles. The distinction of the apostolic churches and the Johannine community is suggested by "the consistent and deliberate contrast between Peter and the Beloved Disciple, the hero of the Johannine community" (p. 82). We note, however, that the argument as it is restricted to Peter strictly speaking would hold only for the Petrine community, whilst for the other communities we might have to argue *a pari*.—Concluding his considerations concerning the relationship between the Johannine community and the other Christian churches Brown emphasizes that he does not interpret the Johannine ecclesiological attitude as aggressively polemic, "for there is no clear evidence that the Johannine community was condemning apostolic foundation and succession, church offices, or church sacramental practices. The Fourth Gospel is best interpreted as voicing a warning against the dangers inherent in such development, by stressing what (for John) is truly essential, namely, the living presence of Jesus in the Christian through the Paraclete. No institution or structure can substitute for that. This outlook and emphasis would give Johannine ecclesiology a different tone from that of the Apostolic Christians known to us from other late first-century NT writings — a Johannine ecclesiology the peculiarity of which reflects the peculiarity of Johannine christology" (p. 88).

At this point, by way of conclusion to Phase Two Brown takes up the question which he posed in the Introduction to the book: "Did the Johannine Christians constitute a sect, which had broken communion (*koinōnia*) with most other Christians?" (p. 89). After

all what has been said so far, the answer is that despite tendencies towards sectarianism the Johannine community, as depicted in the Fourth Gospel, had not really become a sect. "They had not followed their exclusivistic tendencies to the point of breaking communion with these Christians whose characteristics are found in many NT works of the late first century" (p. 90).

Phase Three: when the Epistles were written. Johannine internal struggles. The three letters belong to the same phase of Johannine history. They come from the same author who may reasonably be considered not to be the Beloved Disciple. The three letters allude to a secessionist group. In Brown's judgment the struggle between the community and the secessionists was due to the fact that both groups were interpreting the same Gospel but in opposite ways, in the areas of christology, ethics, eschatology and pneumatology. As regards christology, the secessionists were neither gnostics nor docetists, though similar tendencies may have been present. The main point was that according to them "the human existence of Jesus, while real, was not salvifically significant" (p. 113). In the ethical sphere they claimed to be intimately united with God and to be sinless, though they did not observe his commandments, more particularly the great commandment of brotherly love. To justify their errors they claimed that they were guided by the Spirit of Jesus. They did not remain in communion with the more conservative side of the Johannine community. They moved rapidly towards docetism, gnosticism, Cerinthianism, and Montanism. All these groups took with them the Fourth Gospel with a view to explaining and justifying their own positions. On the other hand the group which remained faithful to the author of 1 Jn seems to have gradually merged with "the Church Catholic" (an expression of St Ignatius of Antioch) or, as Brown prefers to call it, "the Great Church", in the early second century. At first the Apostolic communities seem to have been somewhat wary of accepting the Fourth Gospel which had given rise to error and was being used to support errors. However, covered by the Epistles which acted as a safe guide for the right interpretation of the Gospel, John's Gospel was finally accepted into the canon together with the Synoptic Gospels.

The book concludes with two summary charts: one on the history of the Johannine community; the other on the different religious groupings outside the Johannine community as seen through the pages of the Fourth Gospel. There are further two appendices: 1. on recent reconstructions of Johannine community history; 2. on roles of women in the Fourth Gospel.

It is not easy to give any satisfactory summary of Brown's thesis which is based on a minute analysis of the texts. The basic principle underlying the study is the view that we can detect Christian community life beneath the surface of the Gospel story. However, the author himself warns the reader that the method of analysing the paradigmatic elements of the Gospel is not without its danger. He tells us that his reconstruction claims at most probability, and that he will be happy if sixty percent of his detective work is accepted. In a work like this

there is inevitably an element of subjectivism both on the part of the author in collecting data and on the part of the reader or reviewer in evaluating the conclusions proposed. While appreciating the author's approach to the subject, the minute analysis of texts, the criticism of opinions and the methodical exposition of the argument, I remain somewhat hesitant as to the extent of paradigmatic interpretation to which the Fourth Gospel can be submitted. I also wonder whether arguments based on texts as Jn 10, 30; 14, 28 are not mixing up the ontological and functional spheres. Further, I am not convinced about the interpretation (and therefore about the conclusion based upon it) of Christ's prayer for unity (Jn 17) understood in a horizontal sense, i.e. union of Christians among themselves, rather than in a vertical sense, i.e. union of Father-Christ-apostles in the mission of Christ which is now extended to the apostles (see esp. p. 90). Though seldom, yet at times the manner of arguing looks questionable, not to say arbitrary, as v.g. when Brown argues from "the consistent and deliberate contrast between Peter and the Beloved Disciple (Jn 13, 23-26; 18, 15f; 20, 2-10; 21, 7) and supposes that the evangelist belittles Peter's position (see also 21, 20ff where Peter is said to enquire "jealously" about the fate of the Beloved Disciple). These incidents are supposed to reflect the relation between the Petrine (or the apostolic) communities and the Johannine community. To speak in Jn 19, 26f of an "implicit" contrast between Peter and the Beloved Disciple seems to me regrettable.

At several places Brown introduces into his exposition some reflection about the relevance of some points for our own times. These are summarized in his concluding Reflection (pp. 162-164), where he characterizes the Fourth Gospel as "challengingly different, volatile, dangerous, and the most adventuresome in the NT" writings, as moreover its history through the centuries has proved, till it was placed in the canon next to Mk, Mt and Lk. Brown interprets that fact as a choice made by the Church to live with tension also as regards authority in the Church — a lesson for us. Christians should always remain convinced that "the greatest dignity is that of belonging to the community of the beloved disciples of Jesus Christ" (p. 164).

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

An Address of Archbishop Henry D'Souza, Secretary of the CBCI, at the CRI Governing Body meeting, Bangalore, 11 April, 1980

Dear Fathers, Sisters and Brothers,

This is the first time that I am with the CRI at its General Body meeting. It gives me much pleasure to be here. The CRI is an important Body within the Church in India, not only because of the numbers it represents but also because of its capacity for furthering the cause of the Church. Let me thank your President for the invitation to be here and for giving me these moments to address you.

At several times and places during the CBCI meetings the role of the Religious comes up for discussion. We always welcome the representatives of the CRI, men and women at our General Body

meetings, so that they might understand the desires and planning of the Bishops of India. The presence of Religious Bodies within the Church must be situated within the vision which we have for the Evangelization of India. We do not form parallel Bodies, but are expected to be a united, well-knit formation prospering the Kingdom. The special charism of Religious calls them to be a sign of holiness and is a symbol of radical dedication to the work of God on earth. The multiplicity of Religious Congregations only serves to beautify and embellish the fair face of Christ's Bride. Bishops recognize these values and want to maximize them through CBCI-CRI cooperation and collaboration.

I shall now mention some of the areas which have figured in our discussions and which call for special collaboration from Religious Congregations.

During the Standing Committee meeting at Bangalore the problem of theological controversy arose. Bishops spoke of the free lancing of some theologians who give seminars here and there, and express doubtful and even unorthodox theological speculations. It was a concern which was to be shared with the CRI. We would want to evolve a method by which theological research is fostered and orthodoxy is protected, keeping in mind the pastoral situations and needs of the Church. It would be a worthwhile exercise, particularly in India, where so much of theological research as well as so many of the seminars and in-service courses are being done by Religious personnel. Could the CRI find some formula by which this problem of the wrong forum for theological debate be remedied? Theological controversy may help growth; disturbing the faith of the simple does not.

Another point from the General Body meeting of the CBCI at Ranchi may be noted. We are grateful for the availability of Religious personnel for National and super-diocesan work. However, a problem has emerged: It was noted that sometimes priests and religious were released for regional, national and international assignments in the Church without reference to the local Ordinaries where they would work. In the case of national works, sometimes no reference was made to the CBCI Commission concerned. Hence the position could be very anomalous as they would, in effect, be responsible to none. More common is perhaps the position of those who go for studies for a long period.

The Bishops of the Hindi-speaking Region met in Patna in March 1980. The tragic death of Fr Mathew Manaparambil on the very day the meeting began, brought a tinge of sorrow and gave an edge of realism as the Bishops discussed the situation in North India, the formation of personnel, the approach to injustice, the value of our English medium schools and so on. The need for a united pastorate became very clear. The report has:

Unity among us should be the hall-mark. Affective love should be seen in helping each other to build a Community of faith and love.... We have been sectarian in our way of living, in our liturgy, in our social life....

Unless we are really with the Church and make the problems of the Local Church our own, we can achieve very little. Each Religious Congregation, whether of men or women, was trying to achieve its own goal, unmindful of the urgent needs of the local Church. Perhaps reassessment of our work and apostolate would help us have a wider vision and come together as co-workers striving for a common goal, namely to spread God's Kingdom in the places where we are situated, keeping in mind the wider horizons of the universal Church.

The Bishops at this meeting realized the need for conserving the individual charism of each Congregation and so warned against any "tendencies to reduce all charisms to a common level"—quite a danger in the North. However, this should not allow us to become insular. A wider inter-regional, inter-diocesan collaboration would require a common vision. This is particularly important in the matter of transfers, of continuity of the works and other pastoral concerns.

There are other points too which I want to share with this Conference. In respect of the Liturgy, the Bishops remarked:

An essential requirement of good liturgy in conformity with Indian religious traditions is a basic atmosphere of sacredness. Let our priests observe the directives regarding the use of liturgical vestments, the profound respect for the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the decorum and cleanliness of our places of worship. We remind priests that they celebrate Holy Mass and the Sacraments in virtue of the mandate they receive from the Church through the Bishops. Therefore, they are bound in loyalty to use the liturgical texts and observe the rites given to them by the Church. Only then will they be able to 'edify', i.e. build the Church as a sign and instrument of communion with God and unity among all men (*L.G.*, n. 1).

The loss of the sacred reflects some of the secularizing tendencies of which the Holy Father has spoken. Whereas there is a value in making the sacraments homely and friendly, there are other values to be considered which also build up man's union with God, such as the sacredness of rites, obedience to authority and the external decorum of the celebration. The latest letter of the Holy Father recalls these values quite insistently.

In the field of justice the Bishops called for a multi-religious approach to safeguard human values whenever they are in jeopardy or in peril. Reflecting on some of the atrocities being committed in India today, the Bishops said: "The time has come to take a stand on such injustice whether or not they directly affected the Christian community." In this field Religious have given a powerful lead. It is good to hear that the Bishops are with them in this endeavour.

Reflecting on the educational role of the Church, particularly in North India, it was noted:

The discussion on the situation in the Hindi Region and the work of the Church therein led to consideration of the English medium fee-charging schools in the area. The comment is often made that the good done through such schools are off-set by the unintended effects which flow from them. However, it was felt that such schools had a role to play and not rarely were the

point of entry into the area. They could become places for community building. They could be agents of social change by conscientising students in concern for others. Some experiments have shown that these schools can promote social justice by being neighbourhood schools where the inequalities of India are reflected in a healthy way as fees are levied according to the income of guardians. It was also suggested that vernacular streams could be introduced as also such socially inbuilt transforming elements as adult and non-formal educational activities. As religious Congregations have a large involvement in this system of education, it is necessary to dialogue with religious Major Superiors and help to evolve policies which will be in keeping with the directives of true developmental and evangelical growth.

I have shared some of the salient points which have figured in the discussions of the Bishops during the past few months, particularly at the meeting of the Bishops of the Hindi-speaking region. The process of mutual collaboration is an on-going search. It will require the good will and constant understanding of all the partners who work for the growth of the Church in India. It is my hope that the CRI which has such a large involvement in the leadership of the Church should take very special note of the concerns expressed by the Bishops. The local Church must be the natural concern of the religious Congregations. It is the 'locus' of their activities. The policies and planning of the local Church must be dear to them and form an integral part of their own policies and planning. Religious have a very special role to play as prophets, as pioneers, as interpreters of the signs of the times; but this role can only be played in a meaningful and healthy way when it is integrated into the local Church: its hopes, its sorrows, its problems and its joys. During the past years great strides have been made in this direction. It is my hope that even greater collaboration and participative action will be possible in the years to come.

Book Reviews

Sacred Scripture

Luke and the Pastoral Epistles. By Stephen G. WILSON. London, SPCK, 1979. Pp. xii-162. £ 8.50.

"The purpose of this essay is to defend the thesis that the author of Luke-Acts also wrote the Pastoral Epistles" (p. 1). The hypothesis is not new. In 1965 C.F.D. Moule argued that Luke wrote all three Pastoral letters, during Paul's life-time, at Paul's request and in part at Paul's dictation. He based his view on some of the linguistic and thematic connections between Lk.-Acts and the Pastorals. In 1969 A. Strobel brought in a more detailed examination of the linguistic evidence, adding a brief survey of some of the theological affinities between Lk.-Acts and the Pastorals. However, he does not specify whether Luke wrote as an 'amanuensis' or as an independent author, during or after Paul's life-time. N. Brox (1970) emphatically denies all evidence for Lucan authorship of, or influence on the Pastorals. He takes Strobel to task for ignoring the theological and historical problems implicit in his hypothesis. Dr Wilson in turn examines the hypothesis in the light of the three previous authors. He presents his argument on three levels: 1. the linguistic and stylistic arguments; 2. the theological and historical arguments; 3. objections to the thesis.

Wilson stresses mainly the similarity in theological themes found in Lk.-Acts and the Pastorals, but at variance with Paul's use. Six themes are examined: eschatology (ch. 3), salvation (ch. 4), the Christian citizen (ch. 5), the Church and ministry (ch. 6), Christology (ch. 7), Jewish Law and Scripture (ch. 8). The study on eschatology is rather brief and somewhat one-sided since the Pauline view is hardly mentioned. Salvation is a favourite theme in Paul's letters with its theology of the cross, an aspect which does not appear in Lk.-Acts and the Pastorals with their preference for an exaltation Christology. Dealing with Christology Wilson emphasizes the use

of traditional material (titles, hymns, creeds and Christological summaries) which both Lk.-Acts and the Pastorals use with little discrimination. "The contrast with Paul is dramatic. He too uses traditional formulations, but rarely repeats them unchanged. He refines and corrects them into line with his own convictions and integrating them into a consistent whole. Paul's eclecticism is creative and innovative, not passive and doctrinaire. Here, as so often, a comparison with Paul shows that Luke-Acts and Pastor are as like each other as they are unlike him" (p. 89).

There are also some differences between Lk.-Acts and the Pastorals. These appear more particularly in the attitude of both works towards Jewish Law and Scripture. Both themes are of considerable importance in Lk.-Acts while in the Pastorals they receive scant attention. Wilson considers that these different approaches do not amount to any formal contradiction; the differences are seen as differences in emphasis, resulting from the different genre, the subject matter, and the situation. Hence: "it is quite conceivable that the same man wrote both."—Chapter 9 dealing with the portrait of Paul, and ch. 10 on the movements of Paul and his companions, are important for the validity of the author's hypothesis. A detailed analysis of the differences in Lk.-Acts and Pastorals regarding the portrait of Paul leads the author once again to see these differences as the result in part of purely literary factors and in part of the different contexts in which the works were written. In any case their portrait of Paul is quite different from the one one might gather from Paul's letters. The recurrent interpretation of the differences between Acts and the Pastorals as differences in style, etc., could weaken the thesis since those who uphold the absolute Pauline authenticity of the Pastorals could use the same argument.

In the Preface Wilson admits that his position is "an extreme hypothesis", and he warns the reader that it is based on many assumptions built into the

argument which could not be discussed in detail. He presupposes that Luke, the author of Lk.-Acts, was not Paul's companion of the same name, though he may have had access to material emanating from him. When he wrote Acts Luke did not have access to Paul's epistles, though he may have known of their existence and probably read some of them (1-2 Cor and Rom). Between the time when Luke wrote Acts and the writing of the Pastorals the influence of the gnostics had increased and they had become the major threat to the Lucan communities. Their influence was particularly insidious, since they claimed Paul as the source of their own teaching. Luke wrote the Pastorals to refute the gnostic misinterpretation of Paul and to show the Churches where the source of true authority and sound teaching lay. — Wilson admits that some of his assumptions are debatable, but he considers that none of them are inherently improbable; he feels they are necessary if one is to argue convincingly for Lucan authorship of the Pastorals. His careful study is characterized by judicious caution. So is his conclusion offering his hypothesis "as an interesting possibility" (p. ix). One may hesitate to share the author's assurance in upholding an absolute non-Pauline authenticity of the Pastorals. But in any case the book is worth studying.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

Saint Benedict

La Vie Monastique selon Saint Benoît. By Pierre Miquel. Paris, Beauchesne, 1979. Pp. 333. (No price given).

The title of this admirably published book is: 'The Monastic Life according to Saint Benedict'; and the author is the present abbot of the abbey of Ligugé, whose origins go back to St Martin of Tours in A.D. 360, but which was later 'conquered' by St Benedict's rule.

Indeed, whatever may have been the success or failure of St Benedict during his own life-time (the little biography left to us by St Gregory-the-Great is practically all we know about his life), his Rule became the mainstay of religious life for men and women during centuries in the West. It is not sufficiently known that the Rule of St Benedict is the foundation-stone of the religious ideal of western Christianity. All the great founders after Benedict, Norbert for the Praemonstratensians, Dominic for the

Preachers, Ignatius for the Jesuits, went back to St Benedict's rule for inspiration. We also forget that from approximately the 8th century until the 11th, the 'monastic order' in the West was almost uniquely 'benedictine'. And this does not necessarily mean, as naively thought by many a catholic today, mere contemplation and asceticism, but also apostolate, education, reclaiming waste land, etc.

The Church commemorates this year the 15th centenary of Benedict's birth. The 22,000 members of the monastic order are asked to reflect on their ideal, its permanency, its essential character, its grandeur and limitations. The book of Abbot Miquel is a guide-book to lead monks and nuns into such periods of reflection. It is divided into two parts: the first, entitled 'Benedictine Monasticism', focusses on Benedict the man, and on his Rule; the second part deals with what could be called 'essentials and accidentals'. I found two sections of that second part, on 'How to situate Monasticism in the Last Quarter of the XXth Century?', and 'What Does the World Expect from Monks?', most enlightening and refreshing. They reflect the great tradition of discernment and insight, which goes back to the Egyptian and Basilian traditions of the Christian East, was handed over to the West by Cassian and St Benedict's Rule, imbibed by Ignatius of Loyola through the Montserrat Benedictines, and is now recognized by modern psychology.

The Jesuits, who often overlook the Benedictine roots of their founder, would do well to read the section of the book (pp. 272-275), entitled 'Benedictine Abbot and Jesuit General', which includes a synopsis of parallel texts from the Rule and Ignatius' Constitutions. The relationship is striking.

Actually, if 'monasticism' is taken in its original meaning, as total dedication to God either as a hermit or in a community (conventual life), all religious can be said to 'participate' in one way or another in the monastic ideal.

The fourth section of the first part, entitled 'Major Themes', is an excellent treatise on the monastic ideal as envisaged by Benedict. It constitutes, perhaps, the most valuable contribution of Abbot Miquel to a better understanding of the Rule. It shows the permanent value of a way of life which, at least in the West, has often been compared to the evangelical quest itself.

E. R. HAMBYE, S.J.

Households of God. The Rule of St Benedict with Explanations for Monks and Lay-People Today. By David PARRY, OSB. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1980. Pp. xviii-199. £ 4.50.

The year 1980 is the 1500th anniversary of the birth of St Benedict, rightly called the father of Western monasticism. The appellation deserves to be understood even more broadly than is usually accepted. It then extends also to the whole tradition of religious life which developed in Western Christianity since at least the 7th century. It includes not only the 'ordo monasticus', a phrase which originally referred to all those who lived in Western monastic houses, but to later developments of religious life down to the times of St Ignatius of Loyola.

Ignatius is known to have consulted the famed 'Rule', and the Jesuit Constitutions still bear many traces of the influence of the 'Rule', particularly on such capital subjects as humility and obedience.

This new translation of the Rule and the accompanying commentary which competently shows its relevance to the modern mind are both welcome. I would particularly recommend reading the Preface. With clarity the author brings there into focus the most striking aspects of Benedict's approach to spiritual life. The Rule is more an introduction to spiritual life than a set of cut and dry prescriptions. The Preface makes us realize how Christocentric and evangelical, though very demanding, St Benedict's ideal was.

There is nothing more fulfilling and enlightening than to go back to the roots of one's own tradition, at whatever level they may be found. Parry's contribution will help many to see the Rule as one of the pillars of religious life and to make it their own with the necessary adaptations.

E. R. HAMBYE, S.J.

Faith and Justice

Beyond Our Tribal Gods. By Ronald MARSTIN. New York, Orbis Books, 1979. Pp. viii-150. \$ 5.95.

The subtitle of the book, "The Maturing of Faith", gives a better idea of its content than does the title. Written from the perspective of liberation theology, the book studies the inner theological connection between faith and

justice. The author shows convincingly that actual social commitment (and not merely talk about justice) is the criterion or "yardstick" of faith. "Once injustice is seen to exist, should the Churches ignore it, define it as too large a problem to tackle, feel overwhelmed by it, or simply give priority to other tasks, then whatever they are busy with will no longer be the works of faith" (p. 19). Faith is essentially lived in community, so much so, the author asserts, that it is not so much a vision we have as a company we keep. He writes: "The kind and quality of our visions — including their capacity to guide and sustain us in doing whatever it seems must be done — depends on the kind of people with whom we interact" (p. 70). Therefore the maturity of faith and the search for its authenticity must pass through a progressive broadening of the community with which we identify, till it becomes all-inclusive. With one proviso, though — that this process is biased in favour of those who are now excluded from sharing equitably in the goods of the world.

This is a very disquietening book, calling many of us to a radical rearrangement of our life priorities. It shows how easily we remain prisoners of our inherited group attitudes and unwilling to mature in faith. There are one or two areas in which I would have liked a deeper analysis. In the tension between individual and society the author seems to remain within the dialectic of submission and self-affirming rebellion. I wonder if a theology of the person and of love would not give another solution to the tension. Similarly he seems to imply that all structures, because imposed from outside, operate against the authenticity of faith. Are structures, including language, just a hindrance to being, or are they not often an expression of reality as it is? Does authenticity consist in a refusal to accept the world reality as it imposes itself on us? Perhaps the author's thought is coloured by his personal history, for we are told that after a lively political-priestly ministry he resigned from the priesthood in 1974. Finally there is the problem of the relation between the process of universalization of the faith and the authenticity of the Christian faith as given to Jesus Christ. It is a pity that the author does not keep sufficiently in touch with the full NT meaning of faith: for here the problem is met in its full impact. The study of the NT answer to this question would no doubt here given greater depth to the book. As it is,

and although it is written from a first world perspective, I would highly recommend it to those students who look for a modern approach to the meaning of faith. Don't many of us, after all, live in India within conditions similar to those of the first world?

G. GISPERT-SAUCH, S.J.

Inter-Religious Dialogue

Faith Meets Faith. By ERIC J. SHARPE. London, SCM Press, 1977. Pp. xiv-178. £ 2.95.

This is a well written historical account of "some Christian attitudes to Hinduism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries", as the subtitle specifies. The author warns us that he takes the greater part of the illustrative material from Protestant sources in the English language. Starting with a mixed bag of negative and liberal attitudes in the Victorian era, Sharpe reviews the 'fulfilment' theology (Farquhar) and the search for 'challenging relevance' (Hogg) of the early years of this century. The appeal to a moral commitment as the point of entry and the source of relevance of religions was already on in the years of the first world war, as it remains often today. At this stage the author inserts an odd but useful chapter in which he gives an account of the Hindu answer to the problem of the plurality of religions (Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Radhakrishnan). The loss of Christian nerve is clearly perceptible in the Anglo-American mission theologies between the two world wars, but this is soon followed by the Barthian reaction. The 'escape' into a theology of 'Christian presence', the theology of 'anonymous Christianity' and of 'dialogue in depth' bring the evolution of thought down to the mid-seventies. The over-all picture is not a glorious one. The author shows how much ignorance of past work is evident in recent theologies, specially that coming from Catholics. There is a growing uneasiness in the Christian partners of dialogue, more as a result of onslaughts in the home theological fronts (science, liberalism, Bible criticism, the search for the historical Jesus, Form Criticism) than of the failure of work in mission countries or even the renaissance of Hinduism.

Within its limits the account is well informed and will help specially Catholic theologians working in this area to

become acquainted with much work done in the past. The author often complains of our inadequacy in this line. "Roman Catholic knowledge of Protestant theology of encounter begins (and at times ends) with the work of Hendrik Kraemer" (p. 171). This is unfortunately true. Equally true, and unfortunate, is that his own knowledge of Catholic thought is also quite inadequate and, in my impression at least, negatively biased. Only von Hügel and, of all people, Ronald Knox deserve to be quoted from pre-Vatican writing in the area. Vatican II is made to appear as a sudden and totally new eruption of thought, as if it had not been prepared by very solid theological research. Neither Congar, nor Danielou, nor de Lubac, nor Pierre Charles, nor Monchanin — not to speak of the Calcutta school of Indology — are even mentioned. Váth's *Im Kampfe...* is stated to have been the text-book of German Catholic missiology! All pre-Vatican and most of post-Vatican theology is thus found to be of poor quality because of the adherence of the Church to the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. The themes of primitive revelation, universal revelation and cosmic revelation are totally ignored, with the result that the "faith" on which salvation is supposed to hinge seems to mean the totality of the Christian religious system — a position already discarded by Vatican I. Hence moral decision is understood to be irrelevant for the theological problem of religious encounter. There may be good reasons to reject the theology of 'anonymous Christianity', but this should be done on more solid grounds than the mere claim that it fails to take religions as totalities, each with its own tonality (p. 129). I do not see that it does; and certainly it cannot be dismissed by quoting a few sarcastic remarks of a much-admired author. Many theologians who have lived much longer in the heat of India have accepted it, even if others offer solid objections, specially to its terminology.

In short, this book is instructive by its positive information, but inadequate in what it touches without sufficient knowledge or inner sympathy.

G. GISPERT-SAUCH, S.J.

The Secret of Arunachala. By ABHISHIKTANANDA. Delhi, ISPCK, 1979. Pp. x-144. Rs 20.

This posthumous work of Abhishiktananda gives us a glimpse of the formative

years of his journey into the depth of Indian (Vedantic) spirituality. It offers a charming account of his visits to Tiruvannamalai and its hierophanic mountain Arunachala, 160 kms South East of Madras, between 1949 and 1955. The initial purpose of these visits was to meet the saintly figure of Sri Ramana Maharshi who in 1949 was almost at the end of his long witness as a mystic, a guru and a teacher of Vedantic spirituality (he died in April 1950). But after his first visit the author discovered both the continued spiritual presence of the Indian Saint at Arunachala and the immense mystical attraction of the mountain itself, the locus of the presence of God in the Saiva tradition. In the caves of the sacred mountain Abhishiktananda spent long months, at times in complete silence, at other times in spoken communion with many seekers of God — authentic or less authentic — who have sought refuge there from times immemorial. With them he discusses the values of silence, of total renunciation and of a radical search for God. Above all he assimilates into his own Christian faith the insights of the Advaita tradition as he was later to develop them in his talks and writings.

The first draft of this work was done in 1956, but what we have here is a re-written version which the author completed in 1970 and in which, undoubtedly, he looks at events twenty years old in the light of his entire rich experience. The vignettes presented to us have the charm of the stories of the Desert Fathers. An interesting collection of people quite at home in the mysterious world of telepathic communication is presented to us; the account is always vivid even if, occasionally, the artifice of literary device is discernable. The book completes the story of Abhishiktananda's formative years, already partly known through *Guru and Disciple* (SPCK, 1973) which recorded his meetings with the Guru Sri Gnanananda. It will be welcomed by all the friends of Abhishiktananda many of whom have been inspired by his courageous and rewarding voyage of exploration into the heart of spiritual India. It will also be an eye-opener for those who, less fortunate in their contacts with Hinduism, are unable so far to value

the wealth of spiritual tradition it continues to bear. G. GISPERT-SAUCH, S.J.

Meeting of Religions. New Orientations and Perspectives. Edited by Thomas A. AYKARA. *Bangalore, Dharmaram Publications, 1978. Pp. ix-185. Rs 15.*

This book collects the papers presented at the 1977 inaugural Seminar of the Centre for Indian and Inter-Religious Studies, opened by the C.M.I. Fathers in Rome. The theme of the Seminar was rather broad: "Foundations and Dimensions of Inter-faith: Indian and Inter-religious Approaches". The papers vary a good deal; some are historical, others anthropological and sociological, some theological. All but one of the 13 contributions are published in English, the exception being J. Ries' French paper on the "Sacred" as a way to God. The specific significance of the Seminar lies in the particular attention it paid to the ancient Indian insights into a general theme. For India has a very long tradition of inter-faith and inter-cult contacts. There are papers on Yoga mysticism, on the Theravada tradition, and on the Atman-Vishnu polarity of Indian religion. Not all the contributions however, deal directly with the theme of the "Meeting of Religions".

G. GISPERT-SAUCH, S.J.

In Quest of Truth. By JAYARAM. *Madras, The Christian Literature Society, 1979. Pp. vii-136. Rs 10.*

The avowed intention of this book is to help young men and women with a religious background but who are bewildered in the secular world of universities to find their bearings in a search for Truth. Unfortunately, in spite of the claim to the contrary, it is a piece of Christian — and Protestant — apologetic in 19th century style, only less intelligent and less well-informed. The book is poorly argued and badly written. The author, we are told, is "the editor of a religious magazine which sends out literature to Hindus living in the United States" (*sic*). It is doubtful if this sample will be of help to many. The book is not worthy of the fine tradition of the CLS. G. GISPERT-SAUCH, S.J.

Wednesday, October 1980

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Man in the Bible
Christian Leadership
Church and Literacy
Prayer of Intercession
Litanies and Inculturation

NOVEMBER 1980

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JOURNAL OF THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

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In This Issue

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of present day theology is that it puts the emphasis on the mystery of man. This in a sense is not new; we have always known that the Word of God is addressed to man and that theology consists in man's reflection upon this Word. What is new, however, is the present awareness of man's humanity and centrality, to the effect that eternal truths seem to be lost on him unless their bearing on human existence is made manifest. Man thus becomes the yardstick of theological discourse. This is well and good; provided, however, man is conscious of the transcendence that constitutes his very being, giving him autonomy and freedom. Hence the need ever to return to the Biblical Doctrine of Man, of which MOTI LAL PANDIT treats in the first article of this issue.

A previous article by Fr Joe CURRIE, published in our September number, introduced the theme of an Effective Christian Leadership. He now treats the topic explicitly, if succinctly, with the directness and vigour that we have come to expect. All would-be effective leaders will do well to ponder his suggestions.

The Educational Apostolate of the Church in India has been under fire in recent years. VIDYAJYOTI has contributed to this discussion in various ways. Articles have been published advocating the service of the poor through education and participation in the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) of the Central Government. In a short article Fr M. KALATHIL argues in favour of Church-run literacy programmes.

We publish two articles on prayer. Reflecting on the theological significance of intercession, Fr Subhash ANAND points to the demands this prayer makes on the person who would sincerely pray for another. Litanies have a long tradition in the Church, and rightly. Why then the apparent dissatisfaction with their traditional forms? Fr G. GISPERT-SAUCH suggests that here is a form of prayer where inculturation is especially in order and easily available. He proposes a model in the Indian context.

Two notes end our present number. One is a short, but moving reflection by Murray ROGERS and his little community after nine years of Christian presence in Jerusalem, in the Ashram style first initiated at Jyotiniketan. In the other Fr Christian TROLL points to the dangers of a Christian interpretation of the Qur'an and, in parallel manner, of an Islamic interpretation of Jesus.

Biblical Doctrine of Man

MOTI LAL PANDIT

MAN, the centre of creation, is a being clothed in the garments of mystery. Man cannot simply be interpreted in terms of his material foundation nor simply from a transcendent perspective. As a subject, he transcends the limitations imposed on him by the space-time structures. It is in this context that we shall explore the biblical understanding of man.

Man in the Image of God

The Bible tells us that man is created in the image of God, for he is not only an intelligent being,¹ but possesses possibilities which he actualizes in moments of transcendence. To say that man arose spontaneously out of dead matter is to reduce his subjectivity to the level of things.² As far as man's belonging to the world is concerned, the Bible emphasises the fact that he was created out of earth. The name *Adam* itself explains the fact that man cannot be divorced from material reality.³ Therefore, man is spoken of as the "one born of earth".⁴ Man, even after death, belongs to the earth, for his bodily constituents are "dust and ashes".⁵ But man is not simply a body, but a spirit too. Man is a living being, for God "breathed the breath of life" into his body. In this sense he became a living and conscious being.⁶ All men share this breath of God, and therefore mankind is one.⁷

Man is God-oriented because he has been created in the image of his Creator. This God-orientation of man can be found even in non-Christian literature and philosophy.⁸ In their scriptural use the terms "likeness" and "image" do not refer to two different levels, but have an identical meaning. When we say that God created man in his own image, we mean that he created him in his own

1. Gen 1: 26.

2. "To think of oneself as a product would be again to think of oneself as a thing." Gabriel MARCEL, *L'homme problématique* (Paris, 1955), p. 66.

3. Gen 3: 19.

4. Wis 7: 1.

5. Gen 3: 19; 18: 27; Ps 103: 14; Wis 15: 10.

6. Gen 2: 7.

7. Job 22; Job 34: 14-15.

8. Cf. Acts 17: 28; Rom 1: 19.

likeness. Thus man is in God's image and also bears his image: "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, for as much as he is in the image and glory of God."⁹ "And as we have borne the image of the earthly father, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly father."¹⁰

Some look at man from the perspective of matter, and therefore fail to find any difference between humanity and animal nature. The Bible, on the other hand, tells us that as far as man's body is concerned, there is no difference between man and animal. Both are flesh (*bashar*).¹¹ Man and animal share the same fate as far as death is concerned, for both return to the same earth.

However, the basic difference between the two lies in this: man is *the crown of creation*. Man was fashioned after God had created everything for him, so that he might be welcomed. He was not created in the manner that other things were.¹² And when he was created, he was made to realise that there was no creature like him.¹³ Man was destined to rule over the earth, as is indicated by the fact that he named the animals.¹⁴ Thus the Psalmist thanks God for having made man "ruler over the works of his hands."¹⁵

Man in Relation to God

Man finds his completeness in relation to God. This does not mean that the scriptures neglect man's cosmic or inter-human relationships. Man's relation to the earth is brought out in the divine command to "replenish the earth and subdue it."¹⁶ However, the conclusive orientation of the Bible consists in the fact that it always considers man in relation to his Creator. This relationship is not something added to him; rather his humanity depends on it. To express this idea, the Bible uses the expression "man of God".¹⁷ Man is man because he is related to God. This means that he is not autonomous, but exists as "man of God". Man is ontologically man in so far as he derives his position from the autonomy of God. This view-point is central to the word of God to the extent that we cannot analyse the structure of man's reality outside of God. No attempt at understanding man can be successful unless he is viewed

9. 1 Cor 11: 17.

10. Ibid., 15: 49.

11. Gen 6: 13, 17; Ps 136: 25.

12. Gen 1: 26.

13. Ibid., 2: 20.

14. Ibid., 2: 19-20.

15. Ps 8: 7-9.

16. Gen 1: 28.

17. Cf. 1 Tim 6: 11.

in relation to God. If we take man as an autonomous being, having nothing to do with God, we are left with no teleological framework whereby to derive our values and meanings.

Since man is always spoken of in relation to God, we never find the scriptures looking at him as an abstract ontological structure. The analysis of man is given in terms of concrete situations: fall, sin, guilt, death, etc. The scriptures deal with the actuality of man's existence; it is an actuality in the face of God. Man is seen not only in the light of God's wrath or judgement, but also in the light of God's love and mercy.¹⁸ He is never explained in terms of his pure factuality; rather, his factuality is always viewed in relation to God, and it is this relationship which explains it.¹⁹

The structure of man's reality is always spoken of in relation to the divine Thou. "Thou didst form my inward parts; thou didst cover me in my mother's womb. I shall give thanks to thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well. My frame was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eye did see mine unformed substance, and in thy book they were all written."²⁰

The above passage shows the concern of the scriptures to view man's horizontal existence as passing through, and coming from, his vertical dimension. The whole mystery of man is contained in the statement: "Thou hast beset me behind and before"; "such knowledge is too wonderful for me."²¹ Hence it is clear that man cannot exist apart from God. He acquires the fulness of his being only in reference to God.

Man in Relation to Sin

The scriptures do not deal only with man's particular relationships; they speak of the whole man in his total existence. If man faces some kind of polarization it is because he lives a life alienated from his true humanity and from God. All the problems of alienation have arisen because of sin. Sin is not simply an error. It has basically a moral character. Sin is not a sort of calamity which comes unexpectedly on man; it is an evil course of life freely chosen. Sin is not passive that is an imperfection imposed on man. It is an active expression of man's opposition to God. Sin has come into

18. Cf. Ps 90: 3; Gen 6: 5, 11, 13; 7: 1; Ps 8: 5; 144: 3; Lk 2: 14; Tit 3: 4.
 19. Cf. Ps 84: 6; Lk 12: 21.
 20. Ps 139: 13-16; cf. Job 10: 8-12.
 21. Ps 139: 5-6.

the world from a free but evil choice of man. "Yea thou hearest not; yea thou knowest not; yea from that time thine ear was not opened; for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously and wast called a transgressor from the womb."²² "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of law."²³

Sin and therefore alienation, whether of economic, social or political nature, has to be understood in its absoluteness, that is in contrast to good. There are no gradations either in evil or in good. A man is a sinner not because of his lesser goodness, but because he commits sin, and when he commits sin he commits it in its totality. In the Bible that man is characterized as evil who does not love God. One who does not love God, is obviously a misanthrope. Man is on the side of either goodness or evil. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father. . . ."²⁴

The sin of man has to be understood in relation to God. It does not mean simply a lack of conformity to the law of God. It consists of not loving God. In other words, sin expresses itself in the hatred of God.²⁵

When scripture speaks of sin, it looks at it from the point of view of salvation. As we can grasp the significance of man in the light of creation, so we can understand the meaning of sin only in the light of redemptory revelation.

Sin basically is an apostasy, that is, rebellion, falling away from God. Behind the whole idea of sin is an event which reversed the whole course of history. Sin is turning away from the beginning, a break from what God has established.

Non-Christian definitions of evil are often impersonal. Evil is then understood as a negative factor with no relation to God. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned."²⁶ Sin is emancipation from God in the sense that man no more thinks that he is dependent on him. Therefore man needs the revelation of Christ that he may see himself falling away from his true destiny. The sinner is like a husbandman who, by playing the part of an owner, rejects his responsibility. In doing so, he loses his ability to achieve total freedom.²⁷ Sin is that

22. Is 48: 8.

23. 1 Jn 3: 4.

24. Mat 10: 32-33.

25. Cf. Rom 1: 32; 2: 12-14; 4: 15.

26. Ps 51: 4.

27. Mat 21: 33ff.

expression of man in which self-autonomy is made the goal, and this ultimately leads to the denial of God and to self-deification. Sin is, in a word, the proclamation of man's self-sovereignty, and therefore expresses man's enmity to God.²⁸ Man's sense of losing his self-identity can only be grasped within the context of sin.

Man's New Life in Christ

The biblical understanding of man views him not as an object, or as a pure subject, but as a being who is tied to the world. The Bible never speaks of man in abstract terms, but always sees him in concrete situations. Christ, as his ministry made very clear, concerned himself not only with man's interior life, but also with his body. He healed the sick and invalid.²⁹ His healing signified the reconciliation which was taking place in and through him. Man, cursed by sin, needs to be healed and redeemed, and God shows his concern for him in his concrete existence. When man's life is restored,³⁰ he lives a complete existence and is bidden to break the bread with uplifted hands. The new life of man is an eschatological gift in the sense that he is asked to respond to the love of God in freedom, and that the Holy Spirit dwells in his body.³¹ The New Testament community is called forth to realise the full actuality of man: "Glorify God therefore in your body."³²

Once man is born again in Christ, he cuts through sin and overcomes the shadow of death. Henceforward he lives in a community which is filled with love. This mystery of love is the "mystery of Christ".³³

God, who meets me in Jesus Christ, imparts himself to me through his love. God, as love, claims me for himself. By revealing himself to me in this manner, God reveals myself to me; it is a revelation in which I am shown my relation to God. God, being love, wills from me a free response of love. This encounter with the loving God in Christ is possible only by knowing myself, and this knowing of myself is possible only if I encounter God in Christ. Thus, what I am is intended by my Creator. God wills to manifest his glory, and this very will is the source of my being.

God also wills man to respond to his love in Christ with an adoring heart. He wills me not as a mere object, but expects from me an active response to his call. This means that God, who creates

28. Rom 8:7.

29. Cf. Mat 8:17.

30. Cf. Mk 8:25; Acts 3:21.

31. 1 Cor 6:18-19.

32. Ibid., 6:20.

33. Eph 5:32.

through his Word, wills a reflex in me which is a response to his Word.

The image of God, tarnished by sin, is restored in man when he is established in Jesus Christ. It is faith in Christ which restores in man *that* life which he had lost through sin. When man relates himself to the love of God in Christ, he becomes a real man. Thus, authentic existence is for man existence in the love of God. Man realizes his true freedom in his dependence on God (*Deo servire libertas*: Augustine).

Human Freedom

Human freedom in the Christian context is not a mere possibility but actual fact. It is the actuality of being free.³⁴ This freedom is made concrete in relation to Christ, and is actualised in the service of God.³⁵ It is not a freedom which competes with God, like that of an existentialist. In the New Testament, the freedom of man is never spoken of in opposition to God. Freedom is that aspect of man which broadens the horizon of his relationship with God. If we set two freedoms, the divine and the human, in opposition to each other, we are operating within the framework of secularized and humanistic thought. If we hold this view, then, like a humanist, we will reach the conclusion that God's freedom actually robs man of his own. But such an idea contradicts the biblical notion of freedom in so far as God is no longer seen as a loving God, but becomes a jealous God. The Bible reveals God as a God of love — a love which may not be desecrated.³⁶ Yahweh is not jealous of men; his jealousy only consists in the fact that his people have failed to appreciate his love. His anger refers to their worshipping strange gods: "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities."³⁷ From this it is clear that God's jealousy is not to be understood in terms of competition. Man, who receives freedom in creation and salvation, experiences God's jealousy only when he violates this freedom. God concerns himself with that kind of freedom which is derived from man's sonship; it is not a freedom of arbitrary choice.

Freedom, considered as full independence and mastery of one's destiny, is in contradiction with the structure of man. Such a kind of freedom is illusory. Thus, those who promise this kind of false freedom are themselves, in the language of the Bible, in bondage:

34. Cf. Gal 3: 13; 4: 4.

35. Rom 6: 22.

36. See the whole of Ezek 16.

37. Deut 32: 21.

"While they promise liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage."³⁸

Man's true freedom consists in the restoration of his true humanity. This restoration is not a sort of *nirvana*. It is a restoration in which man is not his own, but belongs to God. Therefore, he is asked: "Glorify God in your body and your spirit, which are God's."³⁹ To live for God is to witness a joyful reality: "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."⁴⁰ It is in this situation that freedom is revealed in its entirety in that man, by recovering the structure of his humanity, frees himself from the illusion of self-autonomy. Thus, we are reminded: "I live; yet I live not."⁴¹ To live in Christ means to be freed from slavery. Freedom in Christ is freedom from the law, for "He redeemed us from the curse of the law."⁴² This is not a freedom which stands above the law; it is the fulfilment of the law in Christ.⁴³

The stream of freedom breaks into the world through Christ alone; and it is this light of freedom which discloses the true light of man's humanity. Liberty in Christ is the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Psalmist: "For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their souls from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight."⁴⁴

Freedom and Responsibility

Man's freedom is not absolute, but contingent; it is the freedom of a creaturely existence endowed with personhood, with an "I". That which is an "I" can respond to the possibility of relationship. Since man's freedom is contingent, it is also *limited*, for *man's* orientation is not *a se* but *a Deo*. It does not posit itself, but is *posited*. No doubt, man's response is free, yet it is limited. God wills my freedom in order that he may be glorified. Because God wills my freedom, my freedom has to be responsible, which means it is restricted. It is this restriction which distinguishes man's freedom from God's.

38. 2 Pet 2: 18-19.

39. 1 Cor 6: 20.

40. Rom 14: 8.

41. Gal 2: 20.

42. Gal 3: 13.

43. 1 Cor 9: 21.

44. Ps 72: 12-14.

Man may fail to fulfil the end for which this responsible freedom has been intended by God. The divine intention is that freedom must have a formal as well as a material aspect. That man's freedom is responsible belongs to his nature. Though he can easily deny his freedom, responsibility is a constituent element of his being. This means that man's actual existence has been created.

Whatever the nature of man's response may be, it is a response, even if a negative one wherein the very call of his Creator is denied. A negative response too is an answer to a call, and comes under the law of responsibility. This means that man has been given the capacity to choose, for without this capacity of choice, there is no responsible freedom.

Authentic freedom is characterized by love. A person who lives in the freedom of Christ is invaded by the grace of God, which is the manifestation of God's love. Grace is "the love of God poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us."⁴⁵ Man's soul is possessed by the divine charity, merited by Christ and given by the Holy Spirit. Grace reshapes the entire man. Thus the one who lives in the freedom of Christ is able to heed Paul's word: "You, brethren, have been called unto liberty; only make not liberty an occasion of the flesh, by charity of spirit serve one another."⁴⁶

A Christian is infused with a love which sweetly invites him to believe. This faith demands complete obedience to God. The very act of faith is an invitation to creative freedom, which makes man "pass from death to life".⁴⁷ The participation in the salvific economy of God makes man the son of God. Living faith means that we have overcome the world, because it is "the victory that overcometh the world".⁴⁸

Christian freedom is a movement from light to light. Christ, the light of the world, reveals himself fully, and in him our life is illumined.⁴⁹ Christian liberty consists in the love of God. It is a freedom which says: *Father, not my will but thine be done!*

45. Rom 5: 5.

46. Gal 5: 13.

47. Jn 5: 24.

48. 1 Jn 5: 24.

49. 1 Cor 2: 10-16.

Take Yourself Seriously But...

Towards an Effective Christian Leadership

Joe CURRIE, S.J.

A. A Basic Presupposition

TWENTY-FIVE years of religious life under at least a dozen superiors of pre- and post-Vatican II vintage should qualify anyone to be at least a student of leadership styles. I have observed and experienced just about every shade of Church leader — from the strong-willed disciplinarian we liked to call “the Moose” to the shy gentleman who preferred to rule from afar and won the sobriquet “Zeus”; from some who wanted to control everything and everyone to others who traded ready and generous permissions for the luxury of being left alone and still being well thought of; from those who seemingly liked their job to those who definitely did not.

One of my favourite superiors began his term of office with a disarmingly candid admission. “Brothers”, confessed our new rector, who happened to outrank us seminarians by several generations in age as well as a number of important leadership posts in experience, “I am going to make a lot of mistakes in this job, and I want you to help me.” Now this man, while kind of disposition, was by no means a pushover. “Megaton Mac”, as he came to be known later and elsewhere, was capable of making decisions with clout, and not a little fallout! His honest admission of personal fallibility and his appeal for help in his leadership role, though made long ago, have stayed with me through the years. And they have provided me with an enduring lesson in effective leadership within the Church; a lesson that might be summed up by the principle: “Take yourself seriously . . . but not *too* seriously.”

“Take yourself seriously . . .” For the responsibility is certainly real, and the decisions often difficult, and sometimes unpopular and lonely. In discerning new directions for an individual or the group, the last word is often the leader’s, and so, too, is the blame heaped upon him when those particular directions reach a dead end. Expectations — his own and others’ — are high, and perhaps too high;

but frustrations are just as deep when these hopes and dreams are not realised.

"... *but not too seriously.*" The responsibility for the group and the decisions affecting its growth and change need not be the leader's alone, unless he chooses to make them so. Experience has taught me to be wary of the leader who perceives his function as his own unique burden and cross. Not only does he seem to be taking too much upon himself, but he also discounts the rest of us. And he isolates himself. Sooner or later strained relationships will develop, detrimental not only to the leader's peace of mind but to the group's functioning as well.

Leadership in the Church is in function to the group. Perhaps if this seemingly obvious truth were to be taken to heart by all of us, then some of our current "crises"—in *authority*, in *obedience*, in *leadership*—might find their resolution. All of us—our leaders included—are *first of all* a community of believers, companions and co-workers, bound together by a common concern or interest or vision. If we take our group membership seriously, then we are convinced that by joint action we shall achieve our goals more effectively than if we were to seek them as individuals. Ideally, the leader emerges from the group membership as the one perceived by the others as the best equipped to keep the group functioning well, and to get it most effectively to where it wants to go. But even in our traditional hierarchical structures within the Church, wherein our leaders are usually appointed, the functional subordination of the leader to the group seems to be readily acknowledged. From the pope downwards, Church leaders like to style themselves as the "*servus servorum*", thereby proclaiming that theirs is an authority of service to the community, and not of power over the community. The function of the Christian leader is to *free* the group and its members to pursue their commonly shared aims more expeditiously.

Is this not too idealistic? Mere rhetoric for installation ceremonies, but hardly practicable for the days and years that follow? Is this a concept of leadership made in heaven... but simply out of reach for man as he is, a *homo politicus* with an inborn drive for power, prestige and position?

Not so, it seems to me, if we keep our eyes on the community whose needs call forth the leadership function... and *other* functions as well, as St Paul makes abundantly clear to the Corinthian Christians. We—all of us—serve the community's needs, each in his own way and according to his proper gift or talent. And we—each of us—

is accordingly accountable to the community for the way we contribute to its well-being and growth. Too often, I feel, our leaders can become scapegoats for the rest of us, when we blame them for not doing what they were never intended to do; when we hold them accountable for things that we are really responsible for ourselves. No bishop, for example, however holy and gifted, can give meaning and purpose to *my* life. He may and should provide a climate whereby I might discover and continually re-define my particular identity, but the latter is *my* task, *my* responsibility. Once it becomes clear that I have a vocation to this way of life, and that call has been ratified by the community, then it seems less than fair to make my vocation dependent upon cordial relations with the bishop.

Similarly, a person who gives his superior a blank cheque with regard to a future assignment, by not sharing personal likes and dislikes, or his perception of his current strengths and needs, has no right to complain about a consequent lack of fulfilment in his work. For job satisfaction, so important for an individual's well-being even while being viewed against the broader perspective of his service and availability to the group, is another personal goal that *we* have to go after ourselves; it just cannot be handed to us by another, any more than a superior can make a valid discernment on our behalf when he does not have sufficient information. In such a situation, our unhappiness would be more *our own doing* than his.

Part of our problem with leadership, then, could be that we take our leaders too seriously, meanwhile neglecting our own responsibilities to ourselves and to the group. Do we lean too heavily upon them, expecting more from them than they can possibly deliver? Could it be true — though who of us would admit it? — that deep down we demand that our leaders be philosopher-kings, endowed with the wisdom of a Solomon and the heroics of a David? Granted, we become genuinely incensed when they dare to presume to fulfil such expectations, and we are positively unforgiving when we discover, as we inevitably must, the clay feet of their human fallibility. But is it all *their* fault?

As members of the same group and presumably sharing a common faith vision, we — our leaders and the rest of us alike — lean upon one another and “bear one another's burden” through mutual support and encouragement . . . and accountability. The promise that a newly ordained priest makes to his bishop, or a religious to his superior at the time of his profession, is as much a pledge of loyalty, commitment and accountability to the *community* as to its leader (and, ultimately, to God). In effect that promise says: “You can count on me in good

and in bad. I give you my word." In ratifying that promise, the community through its leader commits itself likewise to the individual in a covenant relationship of mutual accountability. A new relationship is forged within the community; a relationship of responsibility, each to the other: *service* according to function; *support* according to need, but always loyalty and commitment.

Certainly not all our leaders have as much confidence in their companions and co-workers (rightly or wrongly placed) as had my favourite superior, Megaton Mac. Many, I am sure, share the scepticism of the bishop I heard about who, after exacting the promise of obedience from one of his ordinandi, departed from the ordination ritual long enough to inquire, with a mixture of severity and incredulity: "Do you really *mean* it?" A valid question. Unfortunate, though, that it had to be asked at all.

But what, after all, is the value of a promise that is not supported by mutual trust and shared accountability? Both, of course, are *community* virtues. While each of us strives to remain faithful to his responsibilities to the group, the community itself is called to support and encourage our fidelity. So, too, the leader is responsible to the group and to its members for fulfilling his particular role and function (which does not include his taking responsibility *for* us); and we for our part owe him the support that he needs to do his work well. Such mutual accountability requires openness and respect, understanding and recognition on both sides.

Acknowledging his accountability to the group would help to remove many an unnecessary burden from the shoulders of the leader; "I'm going to make many mistakes, and you're going to have to help me. You need me and I need you." Acknowledging, too, our own responsibility to support our leaders, even when we may not always agree with them nor approve of their policies and decisions, and at the same time realising the limitations of their role, would probably diminish some of our own frustrations. For we are all of us pilgrims and companions, seeking our way together — struggling and rejoicing — to the Father and to his kingdom.

Faithful Christians are "led by the Spirit" — *pneumatikoi* — and it is the mysterious leadership of the Spirit that makes us and re-makes us into a people, a community. On our part, we need an ongoing conversion of heart to make us free enough to follow his direction. And we need the confirmation of his peace in action to encourage us that we are in fact on the way. If, being human, we also require one or other of our number to mediate, in a human and often fallible way,

that leadership of the Spirit, the rest of us are not thereby absolved from listening for and following his promptings. This, too, is our responsibility.

Certainly we have a right to expect in our leaders a more than average degree of human qualities. But in the end it seems less important for a Christian leader to make all the right moves, humanly speaking, than that he, trusting in the Lord and in the community in which his Spirit lives and moves, remains free, open and searching with others for the will of God. If I can have the assurance that our leaders are daily making efforts to be truly and spiritually free, and that they are in possession of all the available information to make a given decision, including knowledge of where the Spirit seems to be moving individual members in the group, then I am ready to concede that this may be the closest that we can come to finding God's will for us as a group — even though I may personally have differences of opinion, and even if, in the eyes of the world, the decision results in failure. It's nice to have a happy ending, but God's script — or whatever part of it we can hope to know — does not always comply. Jesus' life and death teach us as much. Failure, in fact, can be a purifying experience and, like other deaths, tends to put our Christian life into proper perspective. It also reminds us of the responsibility that each one of us has — to ourselves and to one another — to keep trying, to keep searching. We are not alone in our efforts. We have one another, if we but trust . . . and can forgive. We have the Spirit, if we but believe . . . and can love. Yes, we need to take ourselves seriously. But not too seriously.

B. Some Implications and their Implementation

In light of the above, and as an interested observer and sometime participant in the leadership function, I would like to offer, for what they are worth, the following "guidelines" for effective Christian leadership. I do not presume to believe that they are exhaustive, but whatever merit they might have would come from the fact that they are derived from experience. Out of deference to Megaton Mac, who always divided his conferences into "three point", I have chosen to present these guidelines under three headings: (1) Personal Life; (2) Interpersonal Relations; and (3) Animating Group Life and Apostolic Work. Further, I have sub-divided each heading into three parts: (a) Attitudes; (b) Skills; and (c) A Checklist of Ten Questions.

Obviously, each of these points deserve fuller development, but for the time being and conscious of the limits of this article, I present them in outline form.

1. *The Personal Life of the Christian Leader*

a. *Three essential attitudes:*

i. *Genuineness*: he can afford to be himself, freely, deeply, comfortably; he can accept (and like) himself, with his abilities as well as his personal limitations; he is not overcome by fear or anger or hurt; he does not need to take refuge behind an array of defenses or a facade of starched professionalism; he respects himself and he can genuinely laugh at himself.

ii. *Courage*: he can stand up for what he believes and act accordingly, regardless of the cost to himself; yet he is not rigid, holding a position beyond reason, for this may well betray fear of any opposition; rather, he is flexible and open and strong enough to engage in the give and take of discussions without compromising principles.

iii. *Freedom*: he is free enough, by grace and by his own efforts, from personal ambitions and fears, and other emotional blocks, as well as from pressures that come from others, to discern sensitively and day by day what God wants from him and from the group he leads.

b. *Three essential skills:*

i. *Self-awareness*: he has insight into his own behaviour and motivation; he is in touch with what is going on inside himself and refuses to repress feelings that may in the end control him.

ii. *Discernment*: allowing for a hunger to do God's will to seize him in day-to-day conversion, he develops a sensitivity to the inner life of the Spirit, sifting those initiatives that seem to be the Spirit's from those that are not.

iii. *Time-management*: he incorporates into his day, in whatever way that suits him, a healthy balance between involvement and withdrawal, or taking distance; he is capable of saying "yes" and "no" to others, conscious of his own responsibilities to himself; he makes good use of leisure time, for he is convinced of its importance; he can and does delegate work to others.

c. *Ten questions:*

1. Realising that I am not perfect (who *is*?), do I nevertheless manage to maintain an "okay" feeling about myself — as significant and competent and likeable?

2. Do I let sink into my awareness the *positive* strokes of recognition and support that come my way, to balance out the inevitable *negative* ones?

3. Do I take the trouble each day to find time to do something that I really like to do, something that completely absorbs me while effectively relaxing me? And is this leisure time as sacred to me as my time for prayer?

4. Do I worry *effectively*, i.e., about things and situations that I can do something about, and have responsibility for; and not unnecessarily burdening myself with things over which I have no control nor responsibility?

5. Am I able to maintain a good sense of humour, so that I can genuinely laugh at myself, at my own faults and foibles?

6. Can I afford to enjoy my work, or at least some parts of it, so that I can look forward to each day with a measure of enthusiasm?

7. Do I have a close friend around, with whom I can be completely myself, and share (if necessary) my own pent-up feelings and frustrations?

8. Relying on the conviction that I have done all — and under the circumstances the *best* — that I could, am I nevertheless open to the possibility that I might *fail*? (Such openness would help to unburden us of an undue anxiety to succeed, which keeps us from taking the risks sometimes demanded of us. Cf. 2 Cor 12, 7-10 and Phil 3, 9-10.)

9. Do I pray, not because I *have* to, or fear the consequences if I do not, but because I *want* to and experience the *need* of this spiritual dimension in my personal life as well as for my leadership function?

10. Do I take time out at least once a day to reflect upon and evaluate my own awareness of God living within me and around me, and to sift and discern those movements and directions that seem to draw me closer to God from those that leave me anxious and disturbed?

2. The Leader's Interpersonal Relations

a. Three essential attitudes:

i. *Understanding*: because he is motivated to do so, he listens well to others and is sensitive to *their* view of things, *their* problems and expectations and experience; he involves himself with others in empathy, without losing his own separateness.

ii. *Acceptance*: he respects individual freedom and responsibility, even when he cannot agree or approve; he trusts the ability and good will of others; he encourages and recognises their contributions to the group; he is able to forgive.

iii. *Accountability*: he respects the group and acknowledges his responsibilities to it, while being clear about their limits; he is open to feedback and confrontation, realizing that isolating himself from such dynamics would only lead to the group's resistance to his leadership; at the same time, he is able to make demands upon others to fulfill their responsibilities to the group; in short, commitment to the group and respect for its potential (both human and spiritual) keeps him from pushing others around and from allowing himself to be pushed around.

b. *Three essential skills*:

i. *Listening*: he is able to attend to others, developing a sensitivity of ears and eyes and heart; he can leave behind his own concerns and perceptions long enough to enter into the "world" of the other.

ii. *Communication*: he is clear and forceful, and yet sensitive to his audience and its current needs and feelings; he is aware that his own life and example, as well as his mode of expression, are often his main "message"; he prefers, when possible, face-to-face communication to written messages and notices.

iii. *Confrontation*: he works for a climate of understanding and acceptance in the group to make possible such a dynamic; he never confronts to hurt, but to invite the other(s) to self-examination, however painful; he limits his remarks to objective evidence instead of using third-hand reports or general impressions; he owns his own experience of the other without accusing or blaming him for it.

c. *Ten questions*:

1. Can I afford to *be myself* with the other members of my group, or am I cautious, anxious or uncomfortable in their midst? Do I find myself growing defensive or apologetic when my actions are questioned?

2. Am I aware of what I tend to do to others — at least some of them — and what they consciously or unconsciously try to do to me? Do I resist the temptation to engage in manipulation and various interpersonal "games"?

3. Do I really *want* to listen to others, convinced that their views are valuable? Do I give "quality time" to others, when I am best able to listen? Am I able to rid myself of distractions so that I can give full attention and concentration to the other(s)?

4. Am I able to express myself — my ideas and expectations and even my feelings — with clarity and conviction, and yet with sensitivity and openness to the views and feelings of others?

5. In helping another to face a passing emotional problem, do I discipline myself from resorting to such unhelpful short-cuts as giving hasty advice, easy solutions and false reassurance? And do I refrain from unnecessary and inappropriate questions?

6. Do I really "prize" and value the other members of the group as well as their individual contributions? Do I take the trouble to *express* to them my recognition and appreciation?

7. Do I respect the legitimate freedom of group members, even encouraging them toward greater responsibility? Or am I, in fact if not by intention, fostering their dependence by exerting excessive control over them?

8. Is my interest in them more than administrative and organisational? Am I convinced that efficiency may be the enemy of effectiveness for such a group as ours?

9. Am I able to develop within the group a true spirit of mutual accountability, so that both myself and others are ready to accept the consequences of our words and actions upon others? Or do I avoid, as much as possible, conflicts and confrontations under the false rationalisation that this is "fraternal charity".

10. When I find it necessary to confront another, am I sufficiently in control so as to do so effectively, i.e., with sensitivity and responsibility? Or does the motive of "putting the other in his place" sometimes enter in, not only indicating some aggression in me, but also condemning the effort to failure from the start?

3. *The Leader's Animation of Group Living and Apostolic Work*

a. Three essential attitudes:

i. *Balance*: he tends to be a "both-and", rather than an "either-or", person; he is as much concerned about the *persons* in the group as with the *work* they are responsible for; he can be both self-effacing and strong, patient and decisive; he joins reflection to action in an on-going praxis.

ii. *Commitment*: he is dedicated to the group of which he sees himself an integral part; he is loyal to those directions perceived to be those of the Spirit; he respects, when called for, confidentiality; he has a problem-solving disposition and is not easily discouraged.

iii. *Respect*: he values the members of the group and elicits and encourages the participation of each according to his function; he respects, too, the pace of history — that of his particular group as well as of its surrounding environment; he refrains from imposing himself on the group and prefers to think *with*, rather than *for*, the group

members; he not only can tolerate but also learn from mistakes — his own and others'.

b. Three essential skills:

i. *Theological Reflection*: he is able to initiate the group in a deepening awareness and analysis of its role and function vis-à-vis the broader backdrop of its faith experience and traditions; he continually brings into confrontation faith and experience, experience and faith, enabling one to challenge and give meaning to the other; he fights the tendency to get lost in work and activity.

ii. *Discernment*: similarly, he promotes group growth and effectiveness as a Spirit-led community by providing opportunities for personal and group conversion, so that he and the others can freely seek out and find God's will for the group; he is aware that what God wants may not in fact be humanly speaking the wisest way, nor organisationally the most effective, but he is convinced that it is the best way for this particular group.

iii. *Conflict Management*: he knows how to face and handle interpersonal conflicts and group divisions when they occur in the group; as a catalyst for their resolution, he concentrates not on divergent views and assumptions but on the felt consequences of actions and behaviour, intended or not, on one another, and appeals to a deeper, shared unity.

c. Ten questions:

1. Do I view my principal task as a leader, prior to any other work I may have, to actualise the group's potential for human and spiritual growth and for apostolic service? Do I take the time and make the necessary effort to forge group unity around its "common vision", namely, "that which makes us ONE"?

2. Am I aware of the various "myths" (e.g. "The Spirit speaks only through Church leaders"), "messages" (e.g. "Ask not; refuse not"), and "models" (e.g. the *one best way* to pray or behave) that can bedevil the community and hinder the leadership of the *Spirit*, if not my own? And do I make efforts to exorcise them?

3. Do I feel accountable to the group? Am I perceived by its members as fulfilling its felt needs?

4. Do I make sure that group members have sufficient time and opportunity for prayer, personal leisure and group relaxation?

5. In my heart of hearts, do I feel that the members of my group are important and capable people? Do I genuinely like them, and try to get personally involved with them? At the same time, do I

discourage dependency and refuse to allow anyone, for whatever reason or personal problem, to hold the rest of the community at ransom and block its growth and effectiveness?

6. Do I reflect *with* the group on issues concerning us? Or do I find myself thinking *for* them and deciding *for* them? And do our reflections include a faith dimension, since we are a faith community, and not just a discussion group?

7. Do I personally keep abreast of developments outside the community, and encourage others to do the same? Do I try to maintain a broader vision and interest than just the activities we are involved in? Do I encourage an on-going critical evaluation of our own ideologies and practice, as individuals as well as in our group functioning?

8. Am I possessed of the courage and patient understanding required to face and attempt to resolve conflicts when they arise in the group, convinced that, inevitable as they are, they can also be used as a force for unity and not division, *if* they are handled effectively?

9. Have I allowed for sufficient time and effort to lead the group in the process of discernment? Are we reasonably confident that we are doing what God wants of us, and not just fulfilling our own ambitions or the expectations of others?

10. Am I courageous and patient enough for us to face the on-going insecurity and risks of being a true faith community, responding daily and as best we can to God's ever-new inspirations? And does my own example inspire my companions to live confidently and "securely" in the midst of uncertainty?

Reorientation of the Educational Apostolate

Mathew KALATHIL, S.J.

THE Church in India is beginning to realise that its elite schools and colleges have a very limited apostolic value. The elites can get their children educated even if the Christian educational institutions close down for good. Again, the value of these institutions which only help to perpetuate and reinforce an unjust social system is itself very questionable. Some rethinking on the educational apostolate is conceded to be necessary by a good number of persons engaged in our schools and colleges. This article is an attempt to explore the possibilities open to the Church to give a new direction to the educational apostolate, whereby education may cease to be a luxury and a means of oppression but may become instead a light to the people to guide themselves and march forward.

Benevolent measures are not a substitute for education. Three months ago I went to a village and heard an interesting story. Before the Independence of India, the Maharaja of Baroda was the ruler of that village and the surrounding area. He saw the tribals in the grip of money lenders. The tribals had mortgaged their lands and were working as labourers of the money lenders. The Maharaja thought the tribals could be made to stand on their feet if they were relieved of their debts and given a new start in life. He accordingly bought up all the land in the area and resettled the disinherited tribals and gave them ownership rights in land. In a matter of 20 years the tribals were back where they were before. Nearly all the land was again mortgaged. They were again working as landless labourers for the money lenders. They remember with sadness and bewail the fact that they had lost their land for a few pints of salt and other condiments which they took on credit from the money lenders' shops. In my prolonged discussions with the villagers it became absolutely clear that their illiteracy had much to do with losing their lands.

In another village I came to know that the villagers had heard of the Debt Relief Act when it was promulgated in Gujarat. The villagers were persuaded by some people to fill the forms for debt relief. The money lenders not only forced the debtors to pay back all the debts,

but gave the debtors a thorough beating for being so stupid as to initiate Court proceedings. The debtors in the area never get receipts for the payments they make, nor know the rate of interest charged and the amounts still owed. They keep on labouring and paying back money till the greed of the money lenders is satiated. As long as the villagers remain illiterate, they are bound to be exploited by antisocial elements, howsoever benevolent the legislations may happen to be.

Take another instance of a villager who had toiled the whole year and got a reasonably good crop from his fields. He sold the crop and realised Rs 200/- for it. He had a dispute with one of his neighbours and was advised by a taut to meet a particular lawyer. The villager was taken to the lawyer by the taut. After hearing the story of the dispute the lawyer relieved the villager of the 200 rupees. The villager went to the lawyer a few days later to inquire what the lawyer had done regarding the dispute. The lawyer demanded another sum of 200 rupees which the villager did not have. Thereupon the lawyer promptly dismissed the villager. The illiterate people often find it difficult to enjoy their earnings in peace.

In contrast to the condition of the illiterate classes who toil and get no reward, there is the class of literates who do not work but collect regular salaries. Some weeks ago I went to the Court of a first class magistrate. The clerks were sitting on their chairs and applying their minds to the cricket commentary on the All India Radio. The present educational system permits a good number of literate people to live on handsome salaries without doing any work to earn them. This is tolerated because the citizenry is greatly illiterate, ignorant, gullible and not demanding their rights and insisting that they should get some return for the taxes they pay.

The task of educating all the illiterate and ignorant people in India is a gigantic one. The experience of the Government of India is somewhat disheartening in this regard. In the year 1977, the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) was launched. Hundreds of crores of rupees were spent ostensibly for the purpose of educating many millions. Hardly a few hundreds of people became literate through the NAEP. Already before the year 1977 the Directorate of Adult Education had been functioning for many years. The results were not encouraging. Yet it is my contention that the Church can initiate mass adult education programmes and succeed in making millions of people in India literate and conscious of their rights. The Church can make it possible for millions of people to use their intelligence through education whereby they may direct and determine their own destiny.

A number of ways of approaching the problem of adult education may be tried. Only a hasty observer comes to the conclusion that illiterate people are stupid and unable to understand that education is good for them. I was very pleasantly surprised in several villages to see the enthusiasm of illiterate people to learn reading and writing. In some cases, when the reasons for learning to read and write were explained to the villagers, they not only understood the same but also proceeded to appoint teachers to conduct classes for them. Further, they contributed their mite towards payment to the teachers who agreed to teach them. They also resolved to plead with and coax the persons who were not convinced of the need for attending literacy classes.

Often, over-enthusiasm is not the ill that plagues literacy classes. In many of the conventional adult education classes people flock together on the first day. A steady decline in numbers is visible thereafter. The teachers in NAEP are not seldom naive. When they are asked why no one attends their classes, they give excuses like: "So and so in the village died. People are in mourning. So, they cannot come to the class." Another type of excuse goes like this: "There is a marriage in the village. People are getting ready for the marriage feast. So, they can't come to the class." The more dull teachers simply declare: "The agricultural season has begun. So, the people are unable to attend classes." Behind most of these excuses is the simple fact of boredom. People do not cherish the idea of sitting for an hour or two and go through dull exercises for literacy. But they may do it if these exercises are sandwiched between some exciting cultural activities, like singing, dancing, putting up playlets, etc. In villages where entertainment facilities are almost nil, cultural activities draw a good number of adults. A talented teacher may just talk about current affairs that affect the villagers and attract a number of people to the classes. It is my experience that anything out of the ordinary is sufficient to attract a fairly large crowd, in a good many villages. The teachers have not to be very brilliant for presenting something new and attractive every night, but just a little imaginative and resourceful.

Another way of approaching the problem of illiteracy is to make full use of the existing local human resources. In each village there may be a couple of persons who can read and write. These persons may not be suitable for the purpose of teaching many people at a time. But they are competent enough to teach one person at a time. This approach has a few advantages. An illiterate person may feel at ease if he is alone with a teacher in the absence of a group. The pupil may be quite relaxed if the teacher is only a few steps ahead of him in the

matter of literacy. Further, a conventional teacher who has only one pupil to attend to may be able to give personal attention and respond positively and adequately to the needs of his pupil.

Paulo Freire spells out one interesting approach to the problem of illiteracy in his book, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. He links learning and literacy to the removal of oppression. People have to be requested to discuss their most pressing and felt needs. As the discussion becomes systematic certain key words appear again and again. They are written down and their composition analysed. A rearrangement of letters may be attempted. This part of the learning process may be converted into a type of word building game. The group discussions not only help the people to look at oppression from many angles, but also may motivate them to act in new ways to deal with the problem collectively. The key words assume a practical and affective meaning for the participants in the discussions. When the words are written down they and their component letters are easily remembered. This approach to the problem of illiteracy has a number of advantages. It is functional and need-oriented. No further effort is required to make literacy appear useful, as the discussions inevitably lead to actions which in their turn become the subject matter of further reflection and discussions. Learning in this approach is the result of collective effort and co-operation and as such highly satisfying to the members of the collectivity.

Yet another approach to the problem of illiteracy may be to provide opportunities to the illiterate persons to experience pleasure in learning, which may be the most exciting experience a person may have when learning is pursued for its own sake. This is possible if individuals are allowed to raise the problems they wish to raise. It will be necessary to allow them to search for the answers to their questions at their own pace and to devise tests to verify the validity of their answers. One's own experience is seen to be the best teacher. A person may learn in a group with others who may cooperate with him on a basis of equality. Super-ordination and subordination which are found in the teacher-student relationship are sufficient to kill the joy in the learning experience. A facilitator may relieve the conventional teacher with great benefit to the learners. The former must insert himself into learning groups and see to it that the members' native curiosity to learn is given full freedom to express itself.

Some priests, brothers, sisters and lay people have already made some attempts to give the masses of people in our villages a chance to educate themselves. One group of dedicated Christians went and stayed in some of the most backward villages of Bihar and spent their

summer vacation trying to think and act with the people and share the knowledge of letters with them. After six weeks of hard work, the members of the group returned home rejoicing. They had not only found their lost brothers and sisters but their own true selves. Some of them described their experience thus: "We were as good as dead men in the traditional educational institutions. The village experience has brought us back to life."

They Have No Wine!

Subhash ANAND

SO often people have requested me: "Father, please pray for me!" and I have, almost as if by a reflex action, replied: "Sure, I will!" I am certain this has also been your experience, and, I guess, it will continue to be our experience as long as we believe in God. On the other hand, I have also been asked, specially by urban college students: "Why should I pray for you? God loves you more than your mother does; he knows all your needs; he will take care of you. Is there any need for me to tell him what you need?" This is a real problem. If God truly loves us, if he thoroughly knows our needs, perhaps better than we ourselves do, if he can effectively fulfil our needs, if he really wants our total happiness, then what is the meaning of intercession, of praying for one another? Is that not a pious, but useless, way of spending our precious time—time which could be more usefully spent working for the youth or fighting for social justice?

I shall not try to answer this question, for its answer is ultimately linked up with our acceptance of Jesus as Saviour, and of his mediation and intercession on our behalf. Absolutely speaking, we could have been saved without Jesus, without God's Word becoming flesh in Jesus, without his death and resurrection. So too, man does not need my prayer. He can definitely be saved without it. But God, in his inscrutable mystery, willed that man should be saved by man, above all by the intercessory life, death and resurrection of Jesus. It is this totally gratuitous decision of God, that makes prayer of intercession meaningful, even today. I have thus summarily indicated the theological propriety of the prayer of intercession. In this article it is my intention to spell out a little more what I am saying, or, to be honest, what I should be saying when I tell people: "Sure, I shall pray for you!"

I believe we can best understand the prayer of intercession by going back, or rather, by going into, the miracle of Cana as deeply as possible, though one major exegete maintains that "it must be honestly noted that the evangelist does nothing to stress the power of Mary's

intercession at Cana."¹ The first thing that strikes us is that Mary fully realizes the gravity of the situation. Usually one would expect something or the other to fall short at a big party, but a wedding without enough wine — such a thing would be unthinkable. In Goa this could almost invalidate the whole affair: no wine no wedding! Mary knows that the whole village would talk of it. The young couple would begin life together on an unpleasant note, with the bride's people piling abuses on the groom's family.

To pray for people is to know them, know them not just casually, but — at least wish to — know them personally, know their problems, their anxiety. To know people means a desire to look at their life through their eyes. This is not easy. There are times when we do feel that a person is making an undue fuss about a trifle. Possibly it is really a trifle — that is when we see it objectively. But human problems never exist merely objectively. Problems are problems for people, and since people are so different, the same "fact" comes across differently to different people. Hence to know a person's problem is to see it as he sees it, as it affects him.

Second, Mary was deeply concerned. All the menfolk present for that marriage must have soon realized that wine was not being served. They were not bothered why. Some of them must have even begun making sarcastic remarks about the groom and his parents. They were concerned about their pleasure. Mary was the only one among the invitees who seems to have sensed the gravity of the predicament. She felt deeply for the bridegroom and his parents. She made her own their anxiety. That was because she was a true friend of the family. She really loved them and wanted nothing to mar their happiness on so grand an occasion.

It is not easy to be concerned for people. Concern demands purity and detachment. It means that we can leave ourselves behind in order to enter responsefully into the emotional world of another. Even when we enter the emotional world of another we must make sure that we do this for *their* sake. When Mary wants to help, it is not to make a name for herself, or to save her reputation as a good neighbour. So too, intercession demands that we truly and selflessly be concerned about the person we are praying for. We must make sure that when we pray for them we do not say: "O God, you better hear my prayer on their behalf, or they will get a bad impression about me!" I have noticed that sometimes when people tell me that the intention they had asked me to pray for has not been granted I feel

1. R. E. BROWN, *The Gospel according to St John* (New York, Doubleday, 1966), p. 103.

humiliated. I feel God has let me down and I am a little more sorry for myself than I am for them! I am not really concerned for them.

To be concerned means to love. When I say "love" I do not mean merely some nice feeling at the moment of prayer. Love is not that simple. If really we wish to pray for a person we have to sincerely strive to accept him. We must be prepared to forgive him, to be kind to him in thought, word, and deed. When we pray for someone we wish God to intervene effectively in his life. This implies that we too are prepared to do whatever we can to intervene effectively—respecting their freedom of course—in the life of the people for whom we pray. When Mary saw that the wine was failing, she went to Jesus, hoping that he would do something to avert an imminent painful situation.²

There are occasions when we really love a person, but find ourselves helpless. This is a very painful situation. Let me give you an example. Imagine me dying of cancer. A whole team of expert doctors and pretty nurses surround my bed, each with some special gadget or medication. Close to my head sits my mother, telling her beads. She knows that she can do nothing, humanly speaking. Who is more concerned for me? Obviously, my mother. She loves more. She wants me to live not just because I happen to be the bread-winner of the family. For the doctors and nurses I may be just one more patient, perhaps an anonymous cancer case. They surely would want me to live—if that will bring greater fame to them and to their institution. This means that even when we cannot do anything concretely we can still truly be concerned, for we can do something better: be present to the person for whom we wish to pray.

In a certain sense presence is the denial of action, but, if properly understood, it is the deepest activity a person is capable of. Through his presence to others, a man shares with others not merely the things he has, but his deepest being.³ Today when we have so much of T.A. group-dynamics, etc., a lot is said about being present to people at the gut-level. There are certain good things about these sessions, but there are some dangers too: our spiritual life can become more and more costly, *a la America*, and, secondly, the nice feelings we experience in these meetings and the subsequent liturgies and prayer-sessions, can make us forget the others. We may think that just because we feel

2. That Mary expected Jesus to do something is evident from her confident instruction to the servants: "Do whatever he tells you" (Jn 2:5b, RSV). Max THURIAN maintains that the remark of Mary to Jesus "reveals a hope of miracle, and is even a prayer that one might be performed." See *Mary, Mother of the Lord, Figure of the Church* (London, The Faith Press, 1963), p. 134.

3. Cf. L. BOROS, *Meeting God in Man* (London, Burns and Oates, 1970), pp. 110-111.

o.k., everybody else is o.k. Hence I suggest another sort of presence: life-style presence.

Let me explain what I mean by this life-style presence. We — a group of seminary-inmates — have a “nice” prayer-session. We pray for the poor and the oppressed, for the helpless victims of social injustice — things which today one hears *ad nauseam*. But our life goes on as before: a life patterned on the consumer-society; we not only work less than those who consume less than us, but we also consume more than we really need. We tend to rationalize our consumerism in the name of education, culture, formation, inter-personal relations, etc. But the fact remains that we are, thereby, the beneficiaries of an unjust socio-economic structure. Can we truly pray for the poor, the oppressed and the exploited?

May be, I could explain all what I have been trying to say till now by reflecting on the intercessory life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Paul, writing to his dear Philippians, assures them of his constant prayer for them, because he yearns for them with the affection of Jesus (1:8). To pray for someone is to love that person as Jesus loved us. How did Jesus love us? Through his incarnational presence

he feels hungry and thirsty like us; he feels lonely and abandoned; he experiences — as we all do — misunderstanding and at times malicious misrepresentation He has been the victim of repression and persecution. . . . Jesus is fully like us, sharing in our tragedy. . . .⁴

Thus, to share in the intercessory prayer of Jesus we need to share in his incarnational presence to the tragedy of others, and also, at times, in his intercessory death for others. To pray for others means to share in their tragedy. To pray for others means eventually a willingness to die for them. In the Old Testament we have two good examples of this disposition. The people have sinned by worshipping the golden calf, and God wants to destroy them. Moses prays for them, adding: “But now, if thou wilt forgive their sin — and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written” (Ex 32:32, RSV). Moses identifies himself so fully with his people that even though he has not shared in their idolatry, he is prepared to suffer its consequences with the people he loves. The second example is that of Esther. She is informed of the doom about to overtake the Jews. Only the king can undo the mischief wrought by Haman. So, desiring to intercede for her people, she goes to see the king, knowing well that anyone going into his presence without being called could be put to death (4:11).

4. Subhash ANAND, “A Prolegomenon to Theologizing in India Today”, VIDYAJYOTI, 1979, pp. 50-51.

There is a beautiful episode in the life of Bābur, the founder of the Moghul rule in India, that illustrates the truth that intercession implies the willingness to die for the person we pray for. Bābur's son, Humāyun, was seriously ill. The physicians had given up hope. Bābur was told that if he were to intercede for him and offer his most precious possession, his prayer would be heard. He put aside the suggestion that he offer the famous jewel, Kohinoor, for pious use, but went round the bed of the sick man three times, with the prayer: "O God, if a life may be exchanged for a life, I, who am Bābur, give my life and my being for Humāyun."⁵ We are told that as a result of this intercessory offering Humāyun recovered, Bābur fell ill and eventually died.

The prayer of intercession not only presupposes a deep love for the person for whom we pray, but also a deep love for God. We are told that "the prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effect" (Jm 16b, RSV). To intercede means to stand between two parties. This is possible only when the person who intercedes is acceptable, a *persona grata*, to both sides, specially to the one to whom the prayer is addressed. We have understood the truth of this early in life, already as children. Whenever we wanted to get something from mummy and we were not too sure of getting it, we would get the youngest, the "pet", to go and ask for it. We were almost sure mummy would not say "no" to her pet.

To intercede effectively we should be friends of God, his "pets". Once again I shall illustrate this statement with two examples from the Old Testament. God has decided to destroy Sodom as a punishment for the appalling wickedness of its inhabitants. Since between friends there can be no secrets, God almost feels compelled to share his plans with Abraham, his chosen one (Gn 18 :17). What follows is a beautiful dialogue between God and Abraham (18 :23-33), and we can see how a friend can bully and assert himself. God allows himself to be bullied by Abraham, and one even gets the impression that he seems to enjoy being bullied — if one may speak that way about him. On the other hand, Abraham was fully conscious that he was talking to the Lord and must have been surprised at his own audacity. I have already referred to the intercession of Moses, to whom "the Lord used to speak . . . face to face, as a man speaks to his friend" (Ex 33 :11, RSV). He too tries to pressurize God by reminding him of the assurance he himself gave him : "Yet thou hast said : 'I know you by name, and you have found favour

⁵ Cf. A. S. BEVERIDGE (tr.), *Bābur-Nāma* (New Delhi, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1970), p. 702.

in my sight. Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thy sight. . . ." (Ex 33 :12b-13).

I said in passing that our intercession is rooted in the intercessory life, death and resurrection of Jesus. His intercession is also the model for ours. If Jesus is the supreme mediator, if he continues to intercede for us (Rm 8 :34), and if his intercession is effective (Hb 7 :25; 10 :14), it is because he is the beloved Son, with whom the Father is well pleased (Mt 3 :17). Before interceding for his disciples and for those who were to believe in him through their testimony, Jesus reminds the Father that he has lived totally for him (Jn 17 :4). Even at Cana, when Jesus tells his mother that his hour has not yet come, he wants to make it clear that "his signs must reflect his Father's sovereignty, and not any human, or family agency."⁶ The Father just cannot say "no" to Jesus! Thus the closer we are to God the more effective will our intercession be. It is for this reason that the Catholic tradition has given so much importance to the intercession on our behalf by the saints, particularly by the Virgin Mary. Her intercession seems to have been effective even at Cana, for even if the miracle was not performed directly in answer to her prayer, the two are definitely related, or as Raymond E. Brown puts it : "On a theological level it can be seen that Mary's request whether by her intention or not, would lead to Jesus' performing a sign."⁷

To love God means that we do everything for his greater glory. This is the rule that should govern our prayer of intercession too. Our prayer should always be that God's kingdom may come, that his will may be fulfilled in the lives of the people we pray for. People who ask for our prayer may really believe that what they wish to obtain is for their spiritual growth, for God's greater glory. But we know that our heart can be very deceitful (Jer 17 :9), and we can, sometimes unconsciously, convince ourselves that what we want is truly for our spiritual good, for our authentic fulfilment — to sound a little modern ! But the truth may often be quite different. We do want God's kingdom to come, but we wish to determine the mode of its coming ! Unconsciously we think we know more than God what is better for his kingdom !

There is one passage in the Gospel of St John that makes me smile whenever I read it. When their brother falls seriously sick Martha and Mary send a word to Jesus that Lazarus, whom he loves, is ill. The Gospel writer reports Jesus' reaction thus : "Now

6. Brown, Op. cit., p. 109.

7. Ibid.

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was" (11:5-6). Does this not sound cruel? Jesus, it seems, could be funny! The two sisters resent his delay and they make it quite clear to him (11:21, 32). The prayer of intercession demands faith in God, who is not a golden calf, but the Lord of human history. For him no tragedy is so great as to have no solution. The resurrection of Jesus means that all prayer is eventually heard, provided we are prepared, like Jesus, to submit ourselves and our loved ones to God in obedience.⁸ The prayer of intercession not only implies our faith that God can do more than we can for our loved ones, but also the faith that he loves them much more than we can, that his generosity is always greater than ours.

In a vision, Maccabeus sees the prophet Jeremias, who is introduced to him by Onias with these words: "This is a man who loves the brethren and prays much for the people..." (2 Mac 15.14). The best — surely not the only thing — we can do for people we love is to pray for them. If we really love them we will feel the need to pray for them, for we will realize how mighty little we can do for them. Often we will find ourselves completely helpless. We will instinctively desire to place them in God's hands, in his loving care, believing that he can do much more for them. But it is not easy to pray for others. To do so we must truly know them and their problems, incarnationally share — as much as we can — their problems. This is possible only if we really love them, as Jesus did, prepared to do whatever we can, if need be, even to lay down our lives for them. But this is not enough. Our love for others must be the overflow of our love for God, and our prayer must be an earnest desire to bring ourselves and our loved ones more fully into his kingdom. Thus when I tell people "I shall pray for you", I am saying, or I should be saying: "I wish to love you and God more!" Thus the prayer of intercession is a challenge, a call to grow in charity, a call to unite ourselves more and more to Jesus in his sacrificial offering to the Father on our behalf.

8. Cf. Subhash ANAND, "The Prayer-life of Jesus and his Resurrection", VIDYAJYOTI, 1978, p. 133.

In Praise of Litanies

G. GISPERT-SAUCH, S.J.

MANY years ago a young tribal from the tea gardens near Darjeeling asked me during a retreat : "Father, how is it a praise of Our Lady to call her 'tower of the tooth of an elephant' ?" That simple question of an adivasi boy raised many problems : the literal slavishness of whoever translated into Hindi the *turris eburnea* of the Loretto litany; the origin of this invocation and its real significance; and the deeper problem of what we call today the inculturation of our faith and worship. In fact I told the boy that he had gone straight to the heart of the missiological problem in the Church !

It was only years later that I received from a colleague the answer to the second problem. He referred me to the description of the bride in Solomon's Song : "*Your neck is like an ivory tower*" (7 : 4). The poetic image had been lost by forgetting the neck and concentrating on the tower. A similar biblical reference and comparison lies behind the "tower of David" invocation (*ibid.*, 4 : 4); but here again, the *upameya* (the neck) having been lost, neither the *upamāna* (the tower) nor the *upamiti* (the comparison) make much sense. Furthermore, how many of our faithful, whether educated or not, could spot the biblical allusions of these invocations ? Without the weight of the Biblical reference, what meaning is left in the invocation ? And when, moreover, it is translated so unimaginatively as in our case — *hāhīdānt ka gadh* — is not our prayer verging on the ridiculous ?

This is a pity, because litanies are in many cultures a popular and quite effective mode of prayer. They represent a form of vocal prayer particularly suited to congregational use, wherein rhythm becomes a valuable aid to interior concentration. Their strength does not consist so much in the multiplicity or the value of the concepts used in the litany; their power consists rather in leading the mind to a deeper state, to an interior silence. As is the case with many forms of prayer, and the breathing exercises in Yoga, the rhythm of the litany aims at stilling the mind, so as to create an inner zone of quietness wherein the soul communes with the

ineffable Mystery. The 'content' of the invocations has a role to play in creating this silence. A mere recitation of meaningless syllables, as is perhaps done in some *yantrik* traditions, could hardly lead to an authentic mystical prayer; unless such syllables be somehow charged with a non-conceptual but real faith content.

In the litany tradition, at any rate, both in the East and the West, the invocations contribute to the creation of interior silence, less through the concepts they express than through the evocative power, the *dhvani* or *vyāñjanā*, of their poetic and religious content.¹ The invocations contribute to the transcendent dimension in the texture of the silence of prayer. Such an interior silence is not an empty space, a negative state, but is loaded with the sense of the numinous. This numinous quality is suggested by the invocations — it is not identified with their conceptual content but passes through it, with the help of historical and literary allusions and of their own musical quality. Through this deeper "meaning" the invocations help slowly to quieten the mind and to keep it in contact with the Reality of the Holy.

This process is not independent of the poetic value of the invocations. More perhaps than with other forms of prayer, we should, where litanies are concerned, be alive to their authentic poetic sense. The literary *rasa* (taste) is, in the litany, made to serve the religious experience. A prosaic enunciation of adjectives or mere statements of facts would hardly help the mind to enter into the sense of the divine Mystery. Precisely because the function of language in this form of prayer is not to give factual information but to create a contact with the divine, the repetition of invocations and prayers can be meaningful. This repetition progressively leads the soul to the deeper silence. Not rarely people complain that repetition of prayers is meaningless, either because no new information is added or because "God knows already what we need". But information is not the only function of language! In litany prayer language is used to create that numinous interior silence whereby we are brought into contact with the divine Bliss, "from which mind and words bounce back, ungraspingly" (*Tait. Up.*, 2.9).

Being a form of poetry, litany prayer is effective through the suggestions and allusions it brings to those who use it. Its poetic form must uncover the hidden splendour of reality, or point to it

1. On the meaning of these technical words from the Indian tradition of poetics, and their usefulness for our own theology cf. *Biblebhāṣyam*, December 1979. I have tried to sketch out an approach to biblical inspiration from this angle in the *Research Seminar on Non-Biblical Scriptures*, ed. D. S. AMALORPAVADASS, Bangalore, NBCLC, 1974, pp. 136-153.

with the help of references to ambient literature and culture and by its own musical expression. *Rosa mystica* awakens a sense of freshness and beauty and of mystery in anyone living in a place where roses grow and are used to express human love — it may mean nothing to one who has seen only dalias or lotuses. Our "tower of ivory" could be valuable only in a biblically cultivated society. Other invocations are much more universal, though their value may depend on the musical quality of the linguistic expression used — *mater amabilis* may be more evocative than literal translations like 'mother most amiable' or similar ones.

This close link of litanies with poetry language and culture implies that litany prayer must emerge from a particular culture and evolve with its growth. We cannot freeze man's way of prayer and keep it alive, much less litany prayer. We cannot simply transplant a beautiful flower from a garden into an alien soil. We must cultivate the flowers that grow well under each particular climate, even if cross-fertilization and grafting may be useful means of interaction and growth. When we just repeat today the litanies of our Lady composed under a different sky and in a different age, the modern believer may miss in them all resonance to his own religious taste and emotional sensitivities. If this be the case, those litanies will fail to convey to the believer the image of Mary proposed by Pope Paul VI in *Marialis Cultus*, where Mary emerges as a model for the self-understanding of women in the modern world. A frozen litany may become a grave to prayer rather than a spring for the spirit. One may repeat a formula and not grow closer to the divine Mystery.

With reference to a more contemporary approach to the devotion to Mary I was pleased to read in a recent issue of the *Clergy Review* the following litany in use in our Lady's shrine at Washington:²

Mary,
Mary all-graced by God,
Mary mother of the Lord,
Mary ever a virgin,

Mary at Bethlehem,
Mary at Nazareth,
Mary at Canna,
Mary at the cross,
Mary at the upper room,
Mary model of womanhood,
Mary exemplar of humanity,

pray to the Lord for us.
pray to the Lord for us.
pray to the Lord for us.
pray to the Lord for us.

pray for all mothers.
pray for all families.
pray for all married couples.
pray for all who suffer.
pray for all who wait.
pray for all women.
pray for all of us.

2. The litany was composed by the Franciscan Fr Eric DOYLE. It is published in his article, "The Blessed Virgin Mary and Dialogue with Evangelicals", *Clergy Review*, October 1979, pp. 356-357.

Woman of faith,
 Woman of hope,
 Woman of love,
 Woman of suffering,
 Woman of anxiety,³
 Woman of humility,
 Woman of poverty,
 Woman of obedience,
 Woman of integrity,

keep us in mind.
 keep us in mind.
 keep us in mind.
 keep us in mind.
 keep us in mind.
 keep us in mind.
 keep us in mind.
 keep us in mind.
 keep us in mind.

Woman who wondered,
 Woman who listened,
 Woman who followed Christ,
 Woman who longed for Christ,
 Woman who loved Christ,

remember us to God.
 remember us to God.
 remember us to God.
 remember us to God.
 remember us to God.

Mother of God,
 Mother of the Church,
 Mother of humanity,
 Mother of earth,
 Mother we need,

be our mother always.
 be our mother always.
 be our mother always.
 be our mother always.
 be our mother always.

Mary who went on believing,
 Mary who never lost hope,
 Mary who loved to the end,

we thank God for you.
 we thank God for you.
 we thank God for you.

Obviously this is just one attempt among others, but it may inspire leaders of community prayer to seek to express the community's devotion and invocation to Mary — or, *a fortiori* to Jesus, or to God himself — in simple language which is close to the people.

In India there is a very long tradition of litany, specially represented by the *sahasrānamān stotras* of various cults. This is quite an ancient form of worship, preceding the flowering of mediaeval bhakti, as we find it already in the Mahābhārata in a good number of places. Thus in the *Anuśāsana parvan* (13.17.30-150 in the BORI edition) we find the invocation of the thousand names of Śiva; and towards the end of the same *parvan* (13.135.14-120) the thousand names of Viṣṇu are invoked.⁴ I think that in the composition of litanies in Indian languages it would be wise to tap the wealth of poetic and

3. This invocation is a later addition. A letter to the editor in the *Clergy Review*, December 1979, objects to it as implying that Mary's life is full of anxiety, and presumably going against the vision of faith and hope that the letter-writer attributes to Mary. Later correspondence defended the addition (*ibid.*, February 1980).

4. For references to other similar or shorter litanies in the Mahābhārata, in the Purāṇas and other ancient literature, cf. R. N. DANDEKAR, editor of the *Anuśāsana Parvan*, in the critical apparatus, *ad loc.* The two litanies mentioned here and the one to Lalitā are edited and translated by Pandit R. ANANTAKRISHNA SHASTRY, from Adyar, Madras; the *Śivasahasrānamāstotra*, with Nilakanṭha's commentary (1902); the *Viṣṇusahasrānamān*, with a commentary attributed to Śaṅkara (1901); the *Lalitā-sahasrānamān* with Bhāskaraśāya's commentary (1899; later revised and reprinted, fifth edition in 1976). One needs hardly mention that each of these texts has gone through several Sanskrit commentaries, even as many as fifteen for one of them!

religious resources found in these texts which even today are used in the invocation of the various deities. It is obvious that when we borrow particular expressions, these will acquire a new meaning and have a new resonance within the context of Christian worship and its specific theology, even while they will keep some of the sap of their original setting. This should not discourage us from the attempt, for this is precisely what inculturation is about. Instead of the *hāthidānt ka gārdā* of our literal translations we could have invocations which by their poetic value, musical resonance and direct meaning would form a magnificent garland of Indian flowers around the neck of Mary. Our love of Mary would be very little if we fail to offer to her these treasures from around us! I may then be permitted to cull a few samples from Sanskrit literature which could possibly be adapted to modern Indian languages. The invocations mentioned could be used in a litany addressed to Mary; for convenience sake I add their literal meaning. Not all of them will find general acceptance; but the list could surely be lengthened and a process of trial and error would probably be required to arrive at a popular formula.

Śrīmātā	(holy mother)
jagajanani	(mother of the world)
sanjivani	(giver of life)
vidhātṛ varadā	(giver of the boons of the Creator)
mitrarūpini	(unique friend)
kṣamā	(mercy)
rājatkṛpā	(radiating mercy)
dayādṛṣṭi	(eyes of compassion)
snehasudhāmayi	(flowing with the nectar of love)
karuṇāmayi	(filled with mercy)
mangalamayi	(auspicious)
prabhāvatī	(luminous)
amalā	(spotless)
nirmalā	(without stain)
vimalā	(pure)
vijayā	(victory)
vandyā	(worthy of honour)
jñāna-vigraha	("seat of wisdom")
tamopahā	(remover of darkness)
bhayaharīṇī	(conquerer of fear)
bhavatārīṇī	(taking the world across to the other shore)
bhavabhāminī	(beautiful woman)
kalyāṇī	(auspicious one)
pāpavimocinī	(deliverer from sin)
paramadhāma-nivāsini	(dweller in the highest abode)
vagvādīnī	(speaking the Word)
kamalalocanā	(with eyes soft and beautiful as a lotus)
vāmakesī	(with beautiful hair)

bhaktānām sukhadā
 ānandarāśi
 sukhakārī
 śubhadā
 sarva-saubhāgya-dāyini
 sarva-śatru-vināśini
 vyādhi-nāśini
 pāpa-nāśini
 candranibhā
 raviprakhyā
 ātmavidyā
 dayāmūrti

(giver of joy to the devotees)
 (fountain of bliss)
 (giver of happiness)
 (giving auspiciousness)
 (giver of all fortune)
 (destroyer of all enemies)
 (destroyer of all diseases)
 (destroyer of sin)
 (shining like the moon)
 (resembling the sun)
 (spiritual knowledge)
 (personification of love).

There could be, of course, a thousand variations of such titles. Here is an area where creativity and tradition, poetic imagination and devotion, sophistication and popular piety can meet. The praises of the Lord Jesus and of his blessed Mother can still be sung in the authentic language of our country, and its expressions made to become a means of our deeper union with the Father.

Notes

A Christian Reflection on Zionism

(In a letter to their friends, dated June 1980, Rev. Murray Rogers and his companions, founders of the Jyotiniketan Ashram in Bareilly and later in Jerusalem, give expression to their sentiments after nine eventful years spent in Israel. The extracts of the letter published here constitute a Christian Reflection on Zionism born of personal experience. They will enable our readers to keep in touch with friends of the Indian Church who continue to keep roots in our country. As the little community sets out on a new trail to Hong Kong, we wish them all God's blessings.) (Ed.)

It is exactly nine years since three of us came here from the east — strangely enough Murray arrived direct from Hong Kong on May 27th 1971! — and now we return further east than India, our old home, with, of course, Rosmarie as a fourth who has been in the Holy Land for 12 years. It will surely take time to fathom the inner meaning for each of us, both individually and corporately, of these years at what you might call the hub of our three monotheisms, the Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths, but we must confess that it now seems surprisingly natural for us to continue our human and spiritual pilgrimage on the very edge of the “world of the Yangtze River”, an ocean of knowledge linked with the great teachings of the Buddha and Confucius and Taoism from which one in four of God’s children, consciously or unconsciously, live. As before, in India and here, we do not go to do a particular work, nor to work on people as if we “have the answers”, even less do we begin our life on the edge of China to educate Chinese friends in being what God makes them! We wish to follow the Light that has been given us, and, by listening and waiting, by silence and joyful worship, by service and simple friendship, to discern more clearly the new horizons of God’s purpose in His love for all humanity, a purpose which remains to be realized in all its cosmic splendour and glory.

However eager we are to begin to breathe this new “air” of Chinese sensitivity and life, it is not easy to say goodbye to Bethany and the Old City and to this dearly-loved little house of Mr. Dickranian who has been the best and most considerate of landlords. Shared joys and sufferings have tied us up closely with many people and although any time during these past years would have been a “bad” time to leave friends, the situation at the time of writing is particularly tragic. These years of life in the Old City under military occupation have been a hard education in human illusions and idolatries and in the bankruptcy of religion disconnected from a life of faith.

Thirteen years ago this week Murray went with crowds of Jewish people to the Western Wall on the second day it was accessible to

them after the end of the Six Day War; he shared the exhilaration, the hopes of Zionism. At that time he too ignored the bulldozed Arab homes that made that pilgrimage possible. Now, however, it seems that the positive potential in Zionism is almost lost and the slim chances of its being turned to good become less month by month. When a movement of liberation such as Zionism proceeds to crush opposition by collective punishment and the deportation of citizens, by the seizure of land and the appropriation and control of water (a drastic means of coercion in a dry and thirsty land), then, unless lessons are learnt and unless change and repentance happen, we human beings, whether Jews or Gentiles, are on a terribly dangerous course. In days of long ago it was a perilous thing to make and worship a golden calf; it is obviously no less dangerous to worship as ultimate either land, nationhood or security. It is this single-eyed devotion to force, whether organized or not, and to "security" that makes us tremble for the peoples of this land, for fanaticism, religious or a-religious, so clearly growing year by year, could easily bring, here and elsewhere, the end of western civilization as we know it.

We find it tragic that armed strength exercises such a hypnotic spell over Jewish people, and they are not alone in this, while as yet non-violent ways of resistance, by Palestinians and by Israeli dissidents alike, are only just beginning to be tried. Indeed, we wonder whether these last years may not prove in the end to be amongst the saddest years ever for Judaism, endowed though it is with a spiritual way containing marvellous gifts of God. If it weren't for such brave Israelis as Professor Israel Shahak, and lawyers Felicia Langer and Lea Tsemel, and others less well known (and less well hated), it would be difficult to keep hope alive for this part of the human family... although at two minutes to midnight there is yet time, as the prophet Jonah discovered in the city of Nineveh. And God still reigns...

We wish we could encourage you by telling you how the Christian Churches are God's agents for justice and reconciliation within this situation of acute religious and political division; sadly, we cannot. Christians from abroad have so often hastened the moral collapse of Zionism by their uncritical support and it has been sobering indeed to see how easily Christian leaders can be "fixed" by the intense ideological propaganda to which they are subjected, combined with flattery or a free seat on a plane with subsequent carefully directed tour. Church leaders here (with one or two notable exceptions), who do not have the advantage of ignorance, are "souls of caution" and instead of standing in with the powerless and oppressed in their struggles for human dignity and rights, issue from time to time risk-free statements. This near silence of the churches and some theologians' readiness to allow the Gospel to be tamed in order to avoid confrontation with Jewish sensibilities — e.g. a recent suggestion by one such involved in Jewish/Christian dialogue that we Christians should drop the title Christ or Messiah in relation to Jesus because Jewish people find it inappropriate! — cries out for a re-birth of courage and love such as filled the first followers of Jesus Christ in this land.

In a world in which struggle for freedom from ideological domination is almost universal there is, it seems to us, a rising cost of Christian discipleship. The way of prudent silence or of the ivory tower is made appallingly easy and O, so reasonable, so intellectual and polite, but is it any more possible with integrity to go that way *and* be in the company of the Lord Jesus Christ than it is to short-circuit Calvary and reach Easter? Nine years' life in Jerusalem has certainly taught us this, that there is no escaping the cross, no cheap grace; superficial smiles at ecumenical gatherings and impressive liturgies unrelated to life are utterly useless in furthering the Kingdom. "Religion" of this sort of whatever spiritual family — when we try to secure our own advantage and privilege, our own power and prestige — cuts itself off from its very Source.

Without hiding from you the misery and sadness of this human situation and our own failure again and again to respond to it with humility and love, we still can bear witness to the extraordinary liveliness of God's presence and action. We remember the special gift to a little group of us of being with Muslims, Jews and Christians, for prayer, fasting and solidarity, on the occasion of the detention and threatened expulsion of Mayor Basam Al Shak'a; we remember times of sharing across the barriers of race and religion when faith becomes relevant to the experience of the oppressed and when one suffers, also and equally, with the oppressors caught in their own nets. It seems to us that God comes only when we know how helpless we are, how incapable of forgiving, of remaining serene under pressure and attack, of maintaining that inner peace that Christ wills to give us again and again and day after day. The more aware of darkness we have become, the more aware we are of Light, Light bringing with it freedom from fear and the assurance that God's promises of forgiveness and strength are not dependent on anything except God himself.

More than ever we have been thankful as a little group (which is often enlarged by friends and visitors) for our regular times of worship each day, for the Lord's presence in our chapel and for his coming in the daily Eucharist and in silence. We have been particularly happy to have our neighbour Jon Ebersole as a regular participant in our times of prayer. When one is battered by events and by the struggles of one's own heart and mind, the Spirit's gift of inner quietness and the ability to accept both oneself and one's neighbours need to be renewed constantly. This city of Jerusalem has a knack of confronting one daily with one's own poverty and God's extraordinary riches, and one of his special gifts to each of us is the others in this still small Community. In that smaller situation April 30th 1980 stands out as a red-letter day. In the middle of a week of silent retreat Rosmarie, after months of thought and preparation, made her commitment to God, and to this spiritual family of Jyotniketan, a commitment in which we were all deeply involved. The presence of Vroni Thurneysen on this occasion was an added joy. It turned out to be touch of God's timing, for two days later came the decisive letter from Hong Kong followed by our "Yes" offered to our Lord in the chapel on the following Sunday. How

often, in ways perhaps that might at first sight seem insignificant, God has shown us his love and assured us of his travelling with us on this fascinating pilgrimage into Life !

We cannot resist sharing our joy in having been allowed throughout these years to celebrate once a week the Great Thanksgiving in the Chapel of St Abraham with Melchizedek which is immediately above Calvary in the Church of the Resurrection. To celebrate there the Cosmic Sacrament (shades of Melchizedek himself !) with readings from eastern Scriptures and to acknowledge as enfolded in his love and purpose God's Hindu and Buddhist children has been a never-to-be-forgotten gift. We even wonder whether that almost unknown "work" was one of the chief reasons why we ever came here — to be allowed that tiny part in the universal redemption of mankind ! Quite a number of groups and individuals have enjoyed this privilege with us, the most regular of all being Helen and Diet, our friends of the Christian Movement for Peace, who are almost like a part of ourselves ! . . .

Mary and Murray ROGERS

Heather SANDEMAN

Rosmarie SCHÖNHOLZER

Readings in Islamo-Christian Interpretation

✓ **The Koran in the Light of Christ.** A Christian Interpretation of the Sacred Book of Islam. By Giulio BASETTI-SANI, O.F.M. Translated by W. Russell Carroll, O.F.M. and Bede Dauphinee, O.F.M. Chicago, *Franciscan Herald Press*, 1977. Pp. xiii-223. \$ 8.50.

Fr Giulio Besetti-Sani, O.F.M., belongs to that 'group' of Christian scholars of Islam who, inspired by the great Islamologist Louis Massignon (1883-1962), have been trying from long before Vatican Council II onwards to view Islam, and especially early Islam as preached by Muhammad and in the Quran not as destructive of Christianity but rather as a preparation for the Christian message.

The present work, a translation from the revised Italian original of 1972, represents the author's most explicit statement of his position to date. The book comprises four parts of unequal length. Part one gives 'The History of an Intellectual and Spiritual Pilgrimage'. It shows how the author, starting from a totally negative assessment of Islam, has developed and changed to his present position which can be summed up thus :

1. The Quran does not reject the true mysteries of the Christian revelation because it does not know them; what it rejects are only the heterodox formulations then widely spread in Arabia.

2. The Islamic theologians have misunderstood such passages and have interpreted them in a radically anti-Christian sense.

3. The Church possesses in the New Testament the key to the right interpretation of the Quran as it possesses the key to a proper understanding of the Old Testament.

4. In like manner as regards the rabbinical exegesis of the Old Testament, the Islamic exegesis of the Quran has to be corrected by Christian insight in the true meaning of the passages in question.

The 'proof' of these somewhat new theses is provided in the second and third part of the book. The fourth part presents the teaching of Vatican Council II on Christian-Muslim dialogue, yet in such a way as to make the author's theses to appear to be an almost necessary outcome or even implication of Vatican II teaching.

The second part of the book provides a kind of short historical and literary introduction to the Quran. The author discusses the various literary genera (divine oracles; apocalyptic visions; psalms, hymns, prayers; historical and legendary accounts; legal texts; military orders and diplomatic treaties) discernible in the Quranic text. He expects from the acceptance of these genera important corrections in the attitudes of the Muslim exegetes of the Quran and much progress in Muslim-Christian dialogue on this level.

The third part, more directly theological in character, concentrates on the content of the Quran. The author does not deny that, according to the traditional interpretation of the Quran, there is a fundamental difference between Islam and Christianity. However, he considers the traditional (anti-Christian) interpretation of the Quran as insufficient. He wants to replace it by a "Christian" interpretation of it.

In this perspective he looks at Muhammad as having been not only a man of God but an 'inspired' prophet on the pattern of, say, the Old Testament's prophets. Thus the Quran becomes, for him, "the special 'revelation' destined for the pagan Arabs, Ishmael's descendants. It is the beginning of a journey in the direction of God. It is the disclosure of the First Commandment to an idol-worshipping people and, at the same time, the initial step forward is comparable to the start of the Hebrew people's religio-social development in the Sinai desert under Moses' leadership. . . . But the Koran is also an initial presentation of the mysterious figure of Jesus Christ to the Arabs, and most of all an appeal to the Jews of Mecca and Medina to recognize that Christ is the Messiah" (pp. 137-138).

The argument of the third part is all geared to prove that Muhammad wanted to lead his listeners, Jews as well as pagans, to the recognition of the God-sent Messiah. Muhammad's knowledge of the Messiah is surely incomplete, yet it does not contain wrong statements. What he rejects are Nestorian and Monophysite misrepresentations of the event and person of Jesus. He wants to protect the Christians from being derided by the Jews. In other words: the Quran offers an incomplete Christology. Yet, all the same it represents and can help towards a slow ascent to the mystery of Christ.

Hence, B.-S. maintains, it is our Christian task today "to reread the Koran by applying a Christian key or interpretation which can only be derived from the New Testament. . . . We have to place ourselves within the living context of Muhammad's religious activity

and find how he used such-and-such an idea, why he used it, and to whom he was speaking. Then we must move to the biblical territory and see what this idea means there, and especially in the New Testament and the context of the Christian revelation. Then we return with this biblical meaning to reinterpret the text of the Koran, which thus becomes 'renewed' and is read in a more profound dimension" (pp. 103-104).

B.-S. thinks that a veil, analogous to that mentioned by St Paul in 2 Cor 3:14-16 regarding the Jews, "prevents the Muslim from seeing the true and authentic countenance of Christ, and this starts with the Quran itself. Only brotherly, sincere and loving help on the part of the Christians could bring Muslims to discover in their holy book the real meaning of its message, oriented towards the 'good news' of the gospel. The Muslim then will realize that he is being given true enrichment because he is not asked to look elsewhere, except in the book that he accepts as being his only criterion of truth" (p. 105).

It is not the place here to show in detail to which startling interpretations of the Quranic text B.-S. is led in following this method. In places he distorts history. So when he states the presence of a Jewish community in Mecca. Or he presents definite misreadings, e.g. when he willfully takes *ahl al-kitab* to denote the scribes of the fictitious community of Jews in Mecca, whereas the traditional and doubtlessly correct meaning is 'people of the Scripture', i.e. Jews and Christians.

We are, furthermore, led to ask: is it needed, theologically, to assume the Quran to refer directly to Christ? Does each passage of it need to be oriented toward Christ? Does the main focus of the Quran really lie in the figure of Jesus the Messiah or not rather on inculcating the absolute uniqueness of God? True, the New Testament and later authors have read and interpreted the Old Testament prophets in the light of Christ. But do we not deem it necessary today to distinguish clearly between the witness of faith of the New Testament authors and their debatable exegetical methods? Have such methods of reading a 'sensus plenior', a 'Christian' meaning into the Old Testament improved Jewish-Christian understanding? Muslims like the great 12th century theologian al-Ghazali adopted the same approach in their Muslim discussions of the Gospel. Christians were not touched by it.

Finally, it is the fundamental rule of inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue to accept the other as he is and wants to be, and not as we imagine him to be or would like him to be. Otherwise such dialogue would have an unreal partner and speak into a void. B.-S. seems to offend against this rule by trying to make the Muslims recognize "a Christian sense" of the Quran.

We do not exclude that, on an existential level, the Quran may well in many cases lead the sincere searcher after the Truth on to the fullness of Christ and that in the light of faith in Christ Quranic passages may take on a new meaning for the Christian believer. But no doubt whether one can justify the method of a 'Christian'

reading of the Quran in the framework of a theological-systematic conception.

We recommend a careful and critical reading of B.-S.'s work but only to persons with a sufficiently thorough knowledge of Islamic and Christian thought and, especially, of the Islamic and Christian exegetical tradition.

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✓ **Jesus : Prophet of Islam.** By Muhammad 'ATA UR RAHIM. Norfolk, Diwan Press, 1977. Pp. 244. (Price not indicated.)

It has become by now almost a commonplace to state that an in-depth theological dialogue between Muslims and Christians can come about only once a Muslim "Christianology" has developed, on the lines of and according to the demanding critical standards of modern scholarship. From the Jewish as well as the Marxist side works on Jesus and on nascent Christianity have been produced that meet these standards.

The beautifully bound and printed work under review by Lt. Col. M. 'Ata ur Rahim, the secretary-general of the Qur'an Council of Pakistan and the Pakistan Chapter of the World Muslim Congress, unfortunately cannot claim to be a serious contribution to such a critical Islamic study of the history and nature of Christology in both the Christian and Islamic traditions.

The first eight chapters try to show that from the time of Jesus onwards there have always been alive within Christendom not only a number of "unitarian" believers but an "Apostolic (Unitarian) Church" built upon the teachings, above all, of the apostle Barnabas and his Gospel, the existence of which is presumed rather than critically established. The "Apostolic Church" was opposed by the "Pauline Church" which is held to be identical with the "Roman Christian Church" that lingers on today in "total sickness". The two last chapters of the book juxtapose without much comment texts about Jesus from the Qur'an and from Hadith in English translation, and thus can be of use to the reader not yet acquainted with these texts.

The book brims over with inaccurate and unsubstantiated historical claims. Very frequently consequential and rather surprising statements are made without any reference to an acknowledged authority. The relatively few references given, usually fail to indicate place and date of the work, and the page of the passage quoted. No distinction whatsoever is made between evidence from original source material and opinions expressed in secondary literature. To mention just one example. The "Gospel of Barnabas" has been proven convincingly to be a medieval forgery written "by a man who had first been a Christian and later turned a Muslim, or by a Muslim who had been forced to become a Christian" (J. Slomp). Our author declares it to be "the only surviving Gospel written by a disciple of Jesus"... and to have been "accepted as a canonical Gospel in the Churches of Alexandria up until 325 A.D." (p. 39). No reference, no proof

is adduced to substantiate the claim. But much of the whole book rests on this assumption.

For a thorough discussion of the Gospel of Barnabas which continues to loom large in Muslim apologetics of the fundamentalist as well as of the popular type, the following can be consulted: J. Slomp, "The Pseudo-Gospel of Barnabas", in *Bulletin of the "Secretariatus pro non-Christianis"*, XI (1976), pp. 69-77, and Id., "The Gospel in Dispute", in *Islamochristiana*, 4 (1978), pp. 67-111.

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The Message of the Quran. Presented in Perspective. By Hashim AMIR ALI. Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo, Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1974. Arabic Text and English Translation. \$ 25.

Not unlike the Holy Bible the Sacred Scripture of Islam does not cease to inspire and fascinate men and women inside and outside their respective traditions. The past decades have witnessed the publication of an increasing number of translations of the Qur'an into English (as into other languages). More accurate and more acceptable to Muslims would it be, in fact, to speak of "interpretations", since the Qur'an is held by Muslims to defy adequate translation and this not only on literary but on dogmatic grounds. It is for this reason, by the way, that the widely accepted renderings of M. Pickthall and of A. J. Arberry are entitled *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an* and *The Koran Interpreted*, respectively.

Dr Hashim Amir-Ali was born in Hyderabad/Deccan in 1903 and by profession is a scholar in the social sciences, trained in India and at the University of Chicago. More than thirty years ago he came into contact with the well-known quranic scholar Mirza Abul Fazl and ever since Amir Ali has in his spare time devoted his heart and intellect to rendering the Qur'an adequately into contemporary English and to penetrate the mysteries of its genesis and message so as to present it convincingly to the modern student.

This complete rendering of the Qur'an is exquisitely printed on high quality paper and is extraordinarily well produced. The author has arranged the suras in chronological order, as established by him, largely following modern authorities in the field. He has divided them into five Books and 600 Sections. In addition he has emphasised what are in his view the more distinctive verses, by provision of light and heavy type. A table in the Appendix (A 4) should facilitate finding passages given in the traditional way of quoting.

The present work is the fruit of much personal and independent study and questioning. It wants, above all, to arouse in the reader sacred industry and curiosity in personal study of the Qur'an. As the author wrote in his earlier work, *The Student's Qur'an: An Introduction* :

The Qur'an does not readily reveal its intrinsic beauties to the passive aspirants of its grace. Only those who seek shall find and even they shall find only to the extent that they seek. (quoted on p. 9)

The translation is far from literal. In fact, in many places it goes plainly against the literal meaning of the original. It is doubtful whether someone with a professional knowledge of the classical Arabic language and literature would have dared to be so free and inventive as Amir Ali proves to be in numerous places of his translation. What one reviewer wrote earlier about *The Student's Qur'an* applies equally to *The Message of the Qur'an* :

He [the author] has made an intelligent and sincere effort to interpret the Holy Book in the light of his own reason, and as such his work may be recommended to the notice of all those persons who are genuinely interested in Quranic studies. It contains much that is not only ingenious but also illuminating. (Quote from *Islamic Culture* on the back cover).

The Interludes and the Epilogue — which hopefully will soon be followed by the fuller commentary to be presented in Volume II — give insights into the author's reflected views on the history of the Quranic text and the (largely poetic) peculiar character of its style. They adumbrate principles of interpretation on the way towards a credible contemporary Quranic jurisprudence.

Christian W. TROLL, S.J.

Evangelicals and Social Ethics. By Klaus BOCKMUEHL. *Dowbers Grove, Intervarsity Press*, 1979. Pp. 47. \$ 2.25.

This little book is a commentary on the fifth article of the "Lausanne Covenant", a document of the international Congress on World Evangelisation. The 5th article concerns social ethics. It is based on three lectures, two by South Americans and one by a North American theologian. The book makes it clear that interest in questions of social justice

is a constitutive element of evangelism. This has led to overcome some of the theological 'prejudices' rooted in history, e.g. the opposition between faith and works. The following words reflect the new approach: "The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead" (p. 14). The fine little book should be of interest to all Christians, evangelicals or non-evangelicals, who are committed to the social dimension of their Christian faith.
S. AROKIASAMY, S.J.

Book Reviews

Sacred Scripture

The Johannine Son of Man. By Francis J. MOLONEY, S.D.B. Second edition. Roma, *Liberia Ateneo Salesiano*, 1978. Pp. xvi-306. Lit 10.000.

This doctoral dissertation was presented at the University of Oxford in 1975. The study is well written, its structure clear and methodical. The first chapter gives a survey of the various scholarly opinions attempting to shed some light upon the enigmatic title 'Son of Man' in the fourth Gospel. The next chapters (chs 2-9) examine the twelve verses where the expression occurs in the Fourth Gospel. This is done by a thorough analysis of the immediate context, its structure and meaning. In that light then the author attempts to discern the particular theological significance of each use of the title. The promise of a vision of God's angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man (1, 51) refers to Jesus' close and continual contact with heaven, his origin and his goal. The next sayings regarding the Son of Man specify further this general reference: the 'Son of Man' is the unique revealer (3, 13), unique because of his heavenly origin and his 'exaltation' which will be a source of salvation. Consequently the 'Son of Man' is also judge (5, 27): each man is judged according to his attitude towards the revealer, either accepting or rejecting him (9, 35). The Son of Man is source of life, more particularly for those who eat his flesh and drink his blood (6, 27.53.62). As revealer and judge he must be 'lifted up' on the cross (8, 28), an event which is to be his glorification (12, 23.34). The use of the title ends with the 'hour' of the Passion when Jesus told the disciples: "Now is the Son of Man glorified" (13, 31). This exaltation of the Son of Man is the climax of Jesus' revelation of the Father's glory, i.e. of the visible manifestation of God's activity in Christ. Following B. F. Westcott (1880) and a number of modern commentators Moloney sees in Pilate's saying: "Behold, the Man" one more 'Son of Man' saying, interpreting it as: "Here he is — the Son of Man" (p. 207).

The concluding chapter (ch. 10) offers a synthesis of the detailed analysis of each occurrence of the title. Moloney discovers a development in the notion of Son of Man from one occurrence to the next. He emphasizes that the title 'Son of Man' and 'Son' or 'Son of God' are not interchangeable. Whereas the latter is used to express Jesus' unique relationship of Son to Father, connotating pre-existence, the Johannine 'Son of Man' always refers to the humanity of Jesus, God's historical presence among us in the mission and person of Jesus. Both titles refer to Jesus as revealer or as revelation itself, but they do so in different ways. John here differs from the Synoptic tradition which sees the Son of Man also as a future figure, the judge of all men at the end of time. According to John, however, the judgment takes place already now in the person of Jesus; yet, "a future judgment is not totally excluded in the Fourth Gospel" (p. 216). Moloney emphasizes that the Son of Man not only reveals God, but is himself the place where God reveals himself and judges. The cross also is a revelatory event.

John has taken the term 'Son of Man' from Christian tradition. "He has used this term in a way which betrays his own theological stance in every instance, even in 5, 27; but the Johannine Son of Man is the continuation of a dynamic, growing interpretation of Dan 7, 13.... It seems possible that John's link with the traditional Son of Man on the one hand, and his accentuation of the human figure on the other, could well place him at the cross-roads between the New Testament and the Fathers of the early Church" (pp. 219f).

An appendix entitled "The Johannine Son of Man 1976-77" covers some recent literature which appeared after the publication of Moloney's thesis, and an evaluation of some criticisms made by reviewers. These reflections are grouped into two areas: 1. the background to John's use of the title 'Son of Man'; 2. the place of the Johannine understanding of Jesus as the Son of Man within the developing Christology of the community which eventually produced the Fourth Gospel.

Moloney clearly re-affirms his earlier refusal to accept any reference to pre-existence, ascension and post-existence of the Son of Man in 3, 13 and 6, 62. He places his view of the Johannine Son of Man within the developing Christological consciousness of the Johannine Church. In this connection he strongly dissociates the Son of Man from the myth of a "descending-ascending Redeemer".

At the outset of the thesis Moloney states that in face of the multiplicity of interpretations often involved in the complexity of research for the various traditions and sources underlying the Fourth Gospel, he prefers to "examine the sayings of the Son of Man as they stand in the overall context of the Gospel itself" (p. 22). In his reply to critics he reaffirms his stand based upon his conviction that the text of the Gospel is the work of "a remarkable Evangelist who both inspired and directed" the developing Christology of his Church" (p. 256). Fr Moloney shows courage in the face of modern trends which concentrate almost exclusively on the pre-Gospel phase, with a view to 're-constructing' the history of the text, neglecting not seldom the message of the Gospel-text itself. No doubt such investigations into the roots of the notion of the Son of Man might perhaps shed some light on the origin of the Fourth Gospel and its interpretation, provided in the process one does not overlook the hypothetical, and not seldom subjective character of the method. This does not exclude the fact that a comparison with the Synoptic tradition or the Jewish apocalyptic use of the expression 'Son of Man' would not have been totally out of place as this probably could have shed some more light on this enigmatic expression and John's particular use of it. Be this as it may, Fr Moloney's study deserves full attention by anyone who desires to understand more fully John's message about Jesus' mission and person.

J. VOLCKAERT, S.J.

Spiritual Theology

Discernement des esprits. Ignace de Loyola. By Piet Penning DE VRIES, S.J. Paris, Editions Beauchesne, 1979. Pp. 218. (No price given).

This is the French translation of a book originally published in Dutch: *Ignatius of de Spiritualiteit der Jezuiteten* (1964). De Vries, one of the best specialists in Ignatian spirituality gives, us both a living commentary of Ignatius'

doctrine of the discernment of spirits (Part I) and an unfolding of the spiritual personality of Ignatius through successive sketches, where biographical data illustrate the thematic analyses of his interior life and of his practice of spiritual discernment (Part II).

The doctrinal part, after attempting a theology of the discernment of spirits, with its trinitarian and ecclesial dimensions, describes the phenomenon and the experience of this discernment, especially through "consolation"; it determines its essence, its practical value and its limitations; also the degree of immediate or "mediate" experience of God to which it bears witness at the various stages of spiritual growth.

The spiritual journey of Ignatius starts with his basic discerning experience at Loyola; it goes on in the "consolation" or "devotion" felt at Manresa; it passes through tensions and conflicts during his peregrinations through Europe and Palestine when he discovers the meaning of obedience; it reaches its end in Ignatius' radical faithfulness to the Spirit during his life as founder and organizer of the Society of Jesus. The book ends with a twofold study: on nature and grace in the Jesuit Constitutions, and on the Trinitarian mysticism of Ignatius. These sketches try to detect the real and truly original countenance of the Saint, behind the masks of a too human hagiography.

The author has an exceptional knowledge of the original sources of Ignatian spirituality. In fact, he keeps so close to them that the doctrine and life of Ignatius are presented almost in the language of Ignatius himself. Though other studies may be more immediately oriented to a practical and pastoral use of discernment, this basic scholarly work, which reveals a delicate spiritual perceptiveness, will bring light and inspiration, provided it is read, not in the context of mere psychologism, but in the light of a faith open to mystical depth.

G. GILLEMAN, S.J.

The Heart in Pilgrimage. By Christopher BRYANT. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1980. Pp. xii-195. £ 3.95.

The poetic title, together with the subtitle, "Christian Guidelines for the Human Journey", adequately describes the substance of this volume: a very concrete guidance for the spiritual growth towards union with God and our brethren in Christ and the Church. The style puts symbolism, poetry and imagi-

nation at the service of solid doctrine. Actually, the author broadly comments all along upon one poem of George Herbert on prayer; he writes: "If prayer be understood in the broad sense of a turning of the heart and mind to God which orients and pervasively influences the whole of life, then *The Heart in Pilgrimage* is concerned with prayer all the time" (p. x).

Basically, the book provides in non-technical form many of the essentials of a pastoral theology and psychology. Starting from the promptings of the indwelling God towards real metanoia, the author gives a modern touch to the classical scheme of the "three ways". His treatment of capital sins (purgative way) in the context of psychology, of the growth in faith (illuminative way) against guilt-feeling and inertia, of the passage from self-love to self-oblation (unitive way)—together with the deepening of prayer, as a victory of love over evil in the world—is full of precious insights. So too are his comments on the cardinal virtues, especially on prudence in the context of vocation and planning. One chapter deals with spiritual guidance and the training of spiritual guides. The chapter on the sacrament of reconciliation is connected with healing of memories and "projection of intentions". We wish the pages on Eucharist and hope had been more central and more developed. Beautiful things are said on the efficacy of prayer, and the last chapter on wisdom is especially revealing of the author's experience. An appendix (already published elsewhere) gives a useful summary of Carl Jung's Typology of Characters in connection with the prayer-life of different types of people.

Though the book is centred on the heart's pilgrimage, we wish the author had shared some more of his insights into the "mission" and the apostolate of the Christian. But we are grateful for this beautiful and enriching book, in which a member of the Society of St John the Evangelist, the Anglican community known as the Cowley Fathers, shares with his readers both his deep spiritual insights and his skill as a psychologist, convinced as he is that a right human psychology can serve the divine wisdom and show its contemporary relevance.

Aimed primarily at Christian readers, especially those who have pastoral responsibility in guidance, preaching or teaching, the book has also in mind those who would not call themselves Christians. In an ecumenical spirit, the author acknowledges his debt to the Catholic

tradition, the Protestant Evangelical spirituality and the wisdom of the East. The style of his book, lucid, serene and all in nuances, is in the best classical tradition of Oxford and makes delightful reading.

G. GILLEMAN, S.J.

The Word and the Spirit. By Sebastian KAROTEMPREL, S.D.B. *Bombay, Asian Trading Corporation*, 1979. Pp. viii-181. Rs 20.

Fr Karotemprel, dean of the Sacred Heart Theological College, Shillong, gives us in this volume solid biblical reflections and homilies. Either as meditations, spiritual readings, preparations for Eucharistic celebrations, or exegetical homilies, they are meant to help the Christian to grow as a "hearer of the Word of God... led by the Spirit" (p. vi).

The author has chosen 21 more difficult key passages from the New Testament, especially from St John and from Hebrews; he gives of them a competent and serious exegesis, while at the same time showing their relevance to our present situation. The last three commentaries in Part II are more in the nature of systematic studies.

These rich biblical meditations will stimulate educated Christians to come closer to the message of the Word of God in prayerful reflection, and will provide preachers and pastors with ready scriptural backgrounds and materials for instructions or homilies. Their work is made easier by indices correlating the passages here studied with their liturgical occurrence in the lectionary.

I would personally have recognized more explicitly the mission aspect of Jn 20, 21-23, besides the personal and inward gift (p. 5) of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, though not in the same "public" and exemplary way as in the "second Pentecost", which thus keeps its distinct meaning as the author aptly stresses. Moreover, he admits that the apostolic and witnessing aspects are implied in the Resurrection event itself (p. 7).

We are grateful to the author for this enlightening and helpful work.

G. GILLEMAN, S.J.

Reaching Out. The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life. By Henri J. M. NOUWEN. *Glasgow, Collins* (Fount Paperbacks), 1980. Pp. 153. 95 p.

The present volume is a reprint of a book published in 1976 and reviewed in VIDYAJYOTI, 1977, p. 423.

The author starts from man's threefold polarity: in relation to himself, he has to pass from loneliness to solitude; in connection with others, from hostility to hospitality; in relation to God, from illusion to prayer. Hence the three parts of the book: the spiritual growth is a "reaching out" to our innermost self, to our fellow human beings and to our God.

Very much aware of the dehumanizing frenzy for activity and the lack of depth of a certain modern society, the author excels in dramatically describing the dark and negative starting point, perhaps more Western than Indian, of the triple journey leading to liberation and communion.

In the last part Nouwen specially develops the Prayer of the Heart as proposed in *The Way of the Pilgrim*. Though short and sketchy, his pages on prayer contain deep insights. But, in the first two parts of the book, while progressively developing the psychological discovery of self and of others, he speaks perhaps too little of God. Do not these two discoveries derive from God's acceptance their essential strength and motivation? The book is challenging and stimulating reading.

G. GILLEMAN, S.J.

Crisis in Mission?

Weltmission in der Weltkrise. Edited by Johannes DÖRMANN. *St Augustin, Steyler Verlag*, 1978. Pp. 92. (No price given). [Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Missionswissenschaft der Universität Münster]

The six lectures delivered before a broad educated public on the occasion of the "Month of World Mission in Münster, October 1978" attempt a "tour d'horizon" from the Far East to the Latin American West and try to shed light on the situation of the missionary Church in communist China, Hindu India, in the Islamic world, Africa and Latin America. Very different aspects of the varied missionary activities are dealt with by specialists, yet in an interdisciplinary manner. J. Dörmann's introducing lecture, by way of thesis rather than by argument, brings out in succinct and rather felicitous formulations the theo-centric nature of mission. Two more contributions are of special interest to the Indian scene.

Paul Hacker (d. 1979), the renowned Indologist, writes about "Catholic Christianity vis-à-vis Hinduism". In a committed and in places frankly polemical

manner he gives his version of efforts in the Indian Church towards "indigenisation"; he does not use the nowadays much more common term of "inculturation". He makes in this context the mistaken statement that the majority of the theologians working in India are of European origin. This was no longer the case in 1978 when the lectures were delivered. In his gloomy survey Hacker comes to the conclusion that "the spiritual foundations of mission or of missionary apostolate in India today are in fact practically suppressed by theologians and by the official church "(=the Bishops' Conference)" (p. 41). Dialogue he views as a pure form of non-committal exchange of "spiritual experiences" that expressly rejects concepts like "true" and "false". His list of the main culprits is impressive: VIDYAJYOTI, *Journal of Theological Reflection* (characterized succinctly as "progressiv-paganisierend"), the publications of the Indian Bishops' Conference, the "private hinduisations" of European monks like Abhishiktananda which represent "the most radical paganisations of Christianity in India" (p. 43). The NBCLC, Bangalore, with its "energetic director D. S. Amalorpavadas", is seen to exert a "destructive influence" in its efforts to "indigenize", even "hinduise" the Church in India. Finally, there figures K. Rahner as far-away yet pervasively influential "father of confusion".

Hacker sees faint rays of hope in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* which he interprets as an unmistakable call back from such aberrations as have been enumerated. Those acquainted with Hacker's writings in this field will find little of real interest in this lecture except some surprisingly blunt statements. However, the wider public to whom this booklet addresses itself is being gravely misled. At least some qualifying editorial remarks, if not a balancing contribution on the same topic, should have been added. As it stands, the chapter misrepresents thoroughly the missionary situation in one of the most lively local Churches of the contemporary *oikumene*.

In sharp contrast to this stands Adel-Theodor Khoury's well-constructed, concise, balanced and judicious lecture on "Christians and Muslims". Here Christian and Muslim views are presented with equal objectivity. A model contribution that certainly merits translation and a wide diffusion in English, Arabic, etc. This contribution alone makes the booklet a worth-while publication.

Christian W. TROLL, S.J.

Christian Ethics

Biblical Ethics. By R. E. O. WHITE. Exeter, The Paternoster Press, 1979. Pp. 256. £ 4.80.

The book is the first volume of a new series: "The Changing Continuity of Christian Ethics". The author presents a systematic examination of biblical ethics, focussing mainly on the N.T. He considers the O.T. ethics in the first two chapters mostly in the sense of a legacy of, and background to, the N.T. Then he proceeds to examine from chs 3 to 6 the ethical ideals in Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom and the paradigm that Jesus himself is, according to the Gospels. In chs 7 to 12, the author discusses themes of Christian ethics as found in the other writings of the N.T., especially the letters of St Paul and the Catholic Epistles, in relation to what is found in the Gospels.

In his analysis of different ideas and themes of biblical ethics, the author is sufficiently critical and conscious of problems of hermeneutics with reference to the contemporary man and world. He is right in saying that Christianity's unique contribution lies in the identification of the moral ideal with a historical person (p. 231). But every age must re-interpret the message of Jesus and reproduce his image ever anew through the living Spirit that is always with us to the end of time. The book is based on class room lectures, and contains many references to different authors, perhaps too many. It is a good contribution to Christian ethics, and will serve as useful reference not only to students of biblical ethics but to any Christian interested in the subject. The get up is attractive. We look forward to the next volumes of the series, in which the discussion of Christian ethics will be pursued down the ages to modern times.

S. AROKIASAMY, S.J.

Christian Living According to Vatican II. By George V. LOBO, S.J. Bangalore, Theological Publications in India, 1980. Pp. xi-484.

The book under review is the fruit of many years of teaching moral theology to Jesuit and non-Jesuit seminarians all over the country. It is addressed to seminarians and to a wider audience. The basic areas and problems of moral theology are dealt with in a comprehensive though succinct way. The author

follows basically a pastoral approach, without entering too much into technical discussions though these are not entirely absent.

The author's approach is in continuity with approaches initiated by moral theologians like Bernard Häring and Josef Fuchs. But he gets his basic inspiration from Vatican II, which has given to moral theologians the task of propounding the nobility of the Christian vocation nourished by Sacred Scripture. He keeps in view all along the contemporary context of India and the world. His treatment of different issues of moral theology is marked with sensitivity to non-Catholics and non-Christians.

In his chapter on moral law the author discusses briefly the concept of *dharma* in Hinduism. One would expect, however, a lengthier discussion on the law of *karma*, either in relation to moral law or in relation to freedom and the responsibility of human acts. The author handles the post-*Humanae Vitae* discussion with balance and objectivity, combined with the pastoral sensitivity needed. Those wanting a more technical discussion of moral law will find one in the treatment of moral absolutes (ch. 12). Ch. 13 contains a pastorally valuable discussion on conflict situations. The author returns to this later (ch. 18, pp. 384-385) as the third intermediary view for morally evaluating human acts in keeping with a person-centred morality.

There are some minor deficiencies or misprints. On p. 212, Ch. E. Curran is printed as Ch. A. Curran. I would also like to point out one or two examples where greater accuracy would be desired. On p. 250, the author says that "killing" is a 'moral disvalue'. But 'killing' is not as clearly understood as a moral disvalue as is 'murder'. On p. 332, while presenting the theory of Kohlberg on moral development, the author assigns age groups for different stages. Except for the first 2 stages, the age limits assigned to the next 4 stages may not be accurate both in fact and according to the theory of Kohlberg.

In conclusion, one must say that the author has done a great service to us in India through this work. TPI has done well to publish the book. The get-up is satisfactory. The author has also provided us with a good subject index. The reviewer believes that the book will be well received in India, in Third World countries and beyond.

S. AROKIASAMY, S.J.
See also p. 495.

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**Fifty Years After
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Vidyajyoti

JOURNAL OF THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

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In This Issue

The Syro-Malankara Church is observing this year the fiftieth anniversary of the union with Rome of Mar Ivanios and his followers. To keep the Golden Jubilee of the "reunion movement", celebrations are taking place in Trivandrum this month, presided over by Cardinal L. Rubin, Prefect of the S. Congregation for Oriental Churches, as papal delegate. This is an important event not only for the Malankara community or the Kerala Church, but for the entire Church in India, and it is fitting that all Catholic communities in the country associate themselves with it. Father E. R. HAMBYE situates the "reunion movement" in its historical context and discusses its significance in the context of post-Vatican ecumenism.

The ecumenical movement, to which on the Catholic side Vatican II had given a strong impulse, seems to have come to a stand-still. Though on the theological plane much progress has been made and continues to be made through doctrinal agreements by joint commissions, organic unity between the Churches remains a remote end. Disillusionment has set in. In this situation it is necessary to ask whether new avenues need not be explored to which in the past too little attention has been given. In an article on "Church-Unity and Social Justice", Fr Subhash ANAND explores one such avenue. The future of ecumenism will depend on the common witness given by the Churches as they address themselves in an evangelical spirit to human problems, in particular to social justice.

Victor Courtois, S.J., whose twentieth death-anniversary falls this month, pioneered in the Indian Church a revival of Islamic Studies and a renewal of Christian-Muslim relations. This was before Vatican II and the dialogue movement which followed in its wake. Commemorating the event, Fr C. TROLL explains the spirit that animated Fr Courtois' work. He shows what an important legacy his single-handed efforts have left to those who in more favourable circumstances are once again taking up this task.

Theological thinking today lays much emphasis on religious experience; and rightly so, for apart from it theology is reduced to vain speculation. But this does not mean that faith is mere fideism or that it can do without reason. Characteristically, the Hindu theological tradition, while stressing the experiential foundation of religious faith, insists on the irreducible role of reason. Fr R. DE SMET shows this in the case of Sri Shankaracharya, the great Vedantin theologian.



Golden Jubilee of the "Reunion Movement" (1930-1980)

E. R. HAMBYE, S.J.

What happened fifty years ago ?

On the 20th September 1930, two Syrian Orthodox bishops, Mar Ivanios, Metropolitan of Bethany, and Mar Theophilos, his suffragan, were received into the Catholic Church at Quilon, by the then Latin bishop of the place, Msgr Benziger, O.C.D. Within one year-and-a-half, most of the monks of the Order of the Imitation of Christ, all the sisters belonging to the female branch of the same Order, some fifty diocesan priests, both married and unmarried (among the latter there were two hieromonks or *rambans*, who traditionally are candidates to an eventual bishopric), six seminarians, and more than 5000 faithful had followed the same path. Some of the laity who joined the Catholic Church were prominent persons, such as judges, advocates and land-owners.

In those days, such "reunion-movements" were generally greeted with enthusiasm by the Catholic world, in India as well as abroad. There was hardly any Catholic newspaper or periodical, which did not comment on this one with favour.

How did the 'Roman fever' catch up ?

There is no doubt that the leader of what then and there appeared as a large-scale movement was Mar Ivanios himself.

Hailing from a locally influential family of Mavelikara, one of the important parishes of the Syrian Orthodox Church in S. Travancore, P. T. Geevarghese (George Thomas Panickerveetil) became an excellent student of the local C.M.S. High School. As a young adult, he decided to join the clergy of his Church, and served as a deacon for some years. Endowed with a strong will-power, he chose to become a celibate priest, a rare occurrence in those days in his community; he studied at the Madras Christian College where in 1907 he secured an M.A. degree in Economics.

Returning home, Deacon Geevarghese was appointed principal of the Mar Dionysios High School-cum-Seminary, thus beginning to assume a position of leadership which he never left since.

By then he had already developed a certain vision as a reformer. He launched evangelical activities with his best students, and soon became one of the chief driving forces of an entire movement that eventually led his Church to autocephaly with a Catholicos, though also to lasting division from a substantial minority that remained faithful to the Patriarch's full authority.

Partly to escape from impending quarrels, partly with the idea of launching a movement for organized religious life, which his Church, once upon a time so strongly monastic, now badly lacked, he left for the famed Serampore College to teach there, to reflect, to pray and to gather followers. By 1919, the Order of the Imitation of Christ was started. Their abbot found for them in the hills of Kerala a marvellous abode, named Bethany. He himself trained the young men; the Anglican Sisters of the Epiphany (Balasore) were asked to train the girls.

Meanwhile the division in his Church deepened. Though remaining one of the strongest supporters of the Catholicos, Fr Geevarghese inspired the bishops of his Church to seek a broader communion. Why not Rome after all? The existence in the Middle East of a Catholic patriarchate of Antioch for the Syrians offered, perhaps, a model. In order to give him greater freedom for his revival apostolate, the Catholicos with his Synod granted him a special diocese made up of the ashrams of his Order, both men and women, with their depending faithful. From bishop in 1925, Mar Ivanios became metropolitan in 1928, with a suffragan, Mar Theophilos.

Since 1925 correspondence with Rome had been entrusted to Mar Ivanios. Yet, years passed without the Catholicos and other bishops showing much desire for a possible union with Rome. Finally, only Mar Ivanios and his suffragan persevered in that intention; they alone took the step in 1930. When in 1932 the Catholic Malankara Church received her autonomy, Mar Ivanios was confirmed by Rome as her Metropolitan.

What were the intentions of Mar Ivanios and his followers?

As noted above Mar Ivanios from his early years as a deacon was essentially a reformer. The circumstances in which through the years he exercised his ministry confirmed this vocation. Always he

was conscious of having received a special mission, that of renewing his Church spiritually.

He read enormously from spiritual writers both ancient and modern, but especially from the Fathers. Was he ever attracted by High-Church Anglican writers? For a while, certainly; but he remained a strong lover of his own Syrian Orthodox tradition. During his stay at Serampore College, he used to prefer attending the Catholic Latin services, to which he also invited the Syrian Orthodox students for whom he acted as warden.

The foundation in his ecclesiastical family of two religious orders was the logical consequence of his quest for reform. The men would be monks, combining the Syrian tradition with that of Indian *sannyasa*, and with a measure of apostolic work. The religious women would combine a rather austere way of life, centred on liturgy, with educational activities. To a great extent the order of men would link up with the ancient form of Syrian monasticism, with its well known combination of withdrawal and apostolic life, contemplation and action. From their ashrams the light and warmth of revival would spread, slowly but continuously.

Why did Mar Ivanios finally turn to Rome? It would seem that after much experience he came to the conviction that his own Church could not flourish and develop without the firm support of the chief Apostolic See, the "patriarchate of patriarchates".

How to evaluate today the "reunion movement" ?

Until Mar Ivanios and his followers joined the Roman Communion, Ecumenism in the sense of the Second Vatican Council was practically unknown in the Syrian Orthodox Church of India. It avoided close contact with the Syro-Malabar Church which it considered as much latinized; as for relations with local Anglicans and Protestants, they were limited to those imposed by the fact that many boys and girls of Syrian Orthodox families were educated in Anglican or Protestant institutions.

The majority of the community led by the Catholicos and his Synod hardly wanted to restore to the full the authority of the Syrian Orthodox patriarch. Hence, there is no doubt, it found itself somewhat isolated. In the mind of Mar Ivanios and some other bishops of his persuasion, union with Rome would give them a more secure status, prevent the further infiltration of Protestant ideas which they feared, and give them a greater sense of universality.

Did they also hope that, once united with Rome, they would be better received by the majority community of the St Thomas Christians, those Catholics still practising the ancient Chaldeo-Malabar liturgy, though in a much latinized form? It is possible, though there is no proof of this hope having influenced the attitude of the pro-Roman party.

Despite the great vision Mar Ivanios entertained and the expectations it raised, the majority of the Syrian Orthodox Church finally refused to follow him.

'Uniatism' has a bad name, especially nowadays after Vatican II. The term refers to the historical phenomenon which has taken place during the last 400 years, when on a number of occasions parts of Eastern Churches have sought and accepted communion with Rome. But the "reunion movement" initiated by Mar Ivanios cannot simply be identified with it. That his was essentially a spiritual quest cannot be denied, even though his approach to reunion, especially in his later period, may be found wanting today. Mar Ivanios was a man of his time, and he cannot be judged according to an ecumenical outlook which, if it is shared by many Christians today, was unknown in his days.

This does not, however, mean that the reunion movement which he initiated fifty years ago should remain the same today and in the years ahead. Circumstances have changed; mentalities and approaches have undergone a quasi-revolution. Kerala itself, thanks to generalized education, is undergoing many changes with deep repercussions in the life of the Churches. It is enough to think for instance of the search in the Syro-Malabar Church for a new Indian and Oriental identity.

Perhaps the Syro-Malankara Church should be viewed not so much as a bridge facilitating the 'union' of the Syrian Orthodox, but rather as an instrument chosen by God to provide the Catholics of India with the example of a living liturgy and to help the Syrian Orthodox, again stricken by divisions, to reflect more of their spiritual tradition and to deepen their ecclesial quest. The Malankara Catholics are then called to be an 'ecumenical' Church. This is no easy vocation, but it is one full of promise for the future.

Church Unity and Social Justice

Subhash ANAND

IT was about a year ago, my colleagues — some of them my erstwhile theology professors — and I were having our evening tea together. One of them had just returned from Europe after attending an international meeting of ecumenists of his religious order. He was sharing his impressions with us: he was very much disappointed, as the topic of the discussions was social justice. If I remember right, he said something like this: "I do not see how ecumenism and social justice are connected." "Oh! It's a fashion for the younger... (his co-religious) to bring in social justice everywhere", remarked one of us. "Yes! They want to be Marxists", added another, while the third was less biting: "It is the Latin American wind blowing in the Church." My feelings were hurt, and I wanted to hit back, as I had so often done in the past, but something held me back. I began to ask myself: Is Church-unity in anyway related to social justice? Are the ecumenical movement and the efforts to build a just society independent of each other, or must they necessarily go hand in hand?¹

In a recent collection of essays, published in honour of the Rev. M. A. Thomas,² writers of different Christian denominations have made some disturbing statements. A Catholic Church-historian, while professing to be a "downright optimist about ecumenical progress",³ is still forced to report "a general impression that the ecumenical cause, also in India, is in the doldrums, without much dynamism left."⁴ The general secretary of the NCCI, while noting that "the Churches in India have much to be thankful to God" for the progress in unity, feels at the same time that "the unity movement appears now to have reached a hold-back, if not an impasse."⁵

1. This process of reflection was further deepened by the author being invited to participate in a national consultation on Common Witness (Alwaye, 14-16 October, 1980), jointly sponsored by the CBCI and the NCCI.

2. M. ZACHARIAH (ed.), *Ecumenism in India* (Delhi, I.S.P.C.K., 1980).

3. E. R. HAMBYE, "The Indian Response to Ecumenism: A Roman Catholic View," *Ibid.*, p. 23.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

5. M. A. Z. ROYSTON, "New Horizons in Ecumenism", in M. ZACHARIAH, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56.

The Principal of a Theological College, evaluating the unity hitherto achieved, indicates two areas where the results hoped for have not been realized. It was expected that ecumenism would deepen the missionary urge within the Churches, but studies indicate that this has not been the case. Second, ecumenical progress has not affected the "quality of the inner life of the Church".⁶ I am not surprised that it was precisely these two fundamental areas where disappointment was experienced, for Christian life and evangelization are intimately connected, and lethargy in one is both the cause and the result of lethargy in the other.⁷

We are thus faced with a question : Why is it that in spite of world-wide efforts, the ecumenical movement seems to be at a stand-still ? Why is it that Church-union has not deepened the inner life of the uniting Churches ? Why have they not experienced an increase in their evangelical fervour ? It is my contention that this is because we have not *really* committed ourselves to social justice. I shall try to show that social justice and Church-unity go hand in hand. To this end I first study the concern for the poor and the oppressed in the Old Testament, and the attitude of Jesus and the early Christians as recorded in the New Testament. I then reflect on the mystery of the Church as a community sent to be the eucharistic presence of Jesus in the world.

Yahweh and His People

One of the fundamental insights of the Old Testament is that God's creation reflects, in some measure at least, his beauty and unity. It is man's sin that disfigures this beautiful creation, making a chaos out of the cosmos. This insight is graphically presented in the account of creation and of the fall of man. Due to his sin, man is alienated not only from God, but also from other men, from mute creation, and even from himself. He begins to experience the alienation of his labour, because the earth tilled by him brings forth thorns and thistles (Gen 3, 18). This alienation of labour will in due time be brought about by man himself, and eventually be institutionalized by structures which, though considered necessary by supposedly sound socio-economic principles, in reality will bring great misery to man and be a source of inhuman and degrading division among men.

God refuses to leave man to his confusion. He promises to once again call men unto himself, to receive his blessing (Gen 12, 1-3).

⁶ S. AMIRTHAM, "The Quest for Church Unity in India", *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

⁷ Cf. PAUL VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nn. 21 and 41.

This promise must be seen against the background of the earlier narration of the tower of Babel: a tragic symbol of man's pride and the consequent chaos (Gen 11, 1-9). Man left to himself cannot understand his brother. He needs divine blessing and God promises his blessing. The Exodus is seen as the fulfilment, partly at least, of God's promise to Abraham (Ex 13, 3-5).

God wishes that this saving act, the Exodus, should be constantly remembered by the Israelites, for it is the event which constitutes them as a people, as his people (Deut 5, 1-6). Hence the Sabbath is proclaimed sacred to remind the Israelites that it was God who freed them from the oppressive labour of Egypt (Deut 5, 12-15). But the Sabbath is also a means to secure due rest not only for the well-to-do, but also for the poor, the underprivileged, the servants and the slaves (Ex 23, 12). So too, this concern for the poorer section of Israel is explicit in the observance of the Sabbath-year (Ex 23, 10-11). The Sabbath is a reminder that, just as God had pity on the Jews when they were being oppressed by the Egyptians and liberated them, so too, they, his holy people, should avoid all oppression and have a liberating attitude towards the poor.

This liberating attitude finds its full crystallization in the celebration of the Jubilee — the Sabbath of Sabbaths. During the Jubilee two very significant things happen. First, if a man, forced by poverty, sells his land, and in subsequent years cannot redeem it, he gets it back during the Jubilee (Lev 25, 25-28). Second, anyone — Jew or stranger — who out of poverty sells himself, becomes a slave, is to be set free during the Jubilee, for God freed them all from the slavery of Egypt (Lev 25, 39-43; 47-55). Thus during the Jubilee alienated land returns to its original owner and bonded labour is done away with. If I may be allowed an anachronism, the Jubilee was essentially a celebration of social justice.⁸

Why is it that in the Old Testament we have this insistence on the land returning to its original owner? It is because only that man is really free who has his own land, his own source of livelihood, and consequently the source of his dignity — though not exclusively. Hence when land is alienated from a family, that family ceases to have a name, a past, and is uprooted (Num 27, 1-11); and, consequently, a man who wishes to buy the land of a childless widow must also marry her, so that her first husband may have an heir who will bear his name (Ruth 4, 4). To possess land is to have a home, to be free. It is this belief that explains why Abraham is

8. From my little experience of jubilee celebrations within Christian communities, I have the impression that most of us do not know the Biblical understanding of jubilee, or we conveniently ignore it.

insistent that the land in which he and his wife will be buried should be his, why he wants to buy it and not just receive it as a gift (Gen 23, 1-20). Death is the last liberating event in man's pilgrimage: through death man enters his land, the land of freedom.⁹

Israel, whom God brought out of Egypt, was to be a sign, an indication of God's plan for the whole of mankind. But tragedy strikes again. Solomon, during whose reign Israel had been fully consolidated as a nation with the temple as the pivotal point of its unity, fell a victim to the charm of many women. As a punishment for his sins of the flesh, he is told that his kingdom would be divided into two (I Kg 11, 1-13). The actual rupture, however, came as a result of the refusal by his son, Jeroboam, to do away with the economic oppression of the people (I Kg 12, 6-20), a refusal that reminds us of the merciless stubbornness of the Pharaoh of Egypt. Till then all Israel worshipped one God, and all flocked to one temple, the one recently built by Solomon. Jeroboam, the rebel leader, felt that if this were to continue, the people would be united. So to perpetuate the division brought about by economic oppression, he set up two calves of gold as gods for his followers, and instituted a new feast and a new group of priests (I Kg 12, 25-33).

The oppression that sparked off the initial disintegration now becomes more widespread. The book of Job contains a poignant description of the state of affairs :

Men remove landmarks; they seize flocks and pasture them.

They drive away the ass of the fatherless; they take the widow's ox for a pledge.

They thrust the poor off the road; the poor of the earth all hide themselves.

Behold, like wild asses in the desert they go forth to their toil, seeking prey in the wilderness as food for their children.

They gather their fodder in the field and they glean in the vineyard of the of the wicked man.

They lie all night naked, without clothing, and have no covering in the cold.

They are wet with the rain of the mountains, and cling to the rock for want of shelter.

(There are those who snatch the fatherless child from the breast, and take in pledge the infant of the poor.)

They go about naked, without clothing; hungry, they carry the sheaves; among the olive rows of the wicked they make oil; they tread the wine presses, but suffer thirst.

From out of the city the dying groan, and the soul of the wounded cries for help; yet God pays no attention to their prayer (24, 2-12, RSV).

9. I am given to understand that in Kerala only those families which have their own land have a house-name.

Yes, the oppressed do feel, at times, that God has shut his eyes to their sorry plight, has closed his ears to their piteous cries. But this is not true. Once again God speaks through his prophets, the "titled defenders" of the poor.¹⁰ God rises in judgment "against those who oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the orphan" (Mal 3, 5). It is significant that the three major prophets speak out strongly against the oppression prevalent in Israel (e.g. Is 1, 12-17; Jer 22, 13-14; Ez 22, 29).

God's punishment takes on frightening dimensions. He hates the solemn liturgy which has become an abomination to him; his soul just cannot endure it (Is 1, 12-17; Amos 5, 21-24). He warns them that if they continue practising oppression, soon there will be no prophets in Israel (Amos 8, 4-12), or, what is still worse, there will be false prophets (Ez 22, 23-28). Israel will be overcome by her adversaries (Amos 2, 6-3, 11); she will once again live in an alien land (Amos 6, 4-7), or become a wandering people (Hos 12, 7-9). There will no longer be anyone worthy to stand between God and his people (Ez 22, 29). Israel, chosen to be a mediator between God and the nations, will herself be left without a mediator, and thus she will have no reason to exist! But, no!

God's love is greater than man's sin. God promises to establish his justice in the land. "A shoot from the stump of Jesse", filled with the spirit of the Lord, shall espouse the cause of the poor (Is 11, 1-5). Once again there will be a solemn Jubilee (Is 61, 1-4). This messianic hope finds its most powerful embodiment in the Servant of Yahweh (Is 42, 1). He will bring God's righteousness to the people by suffering with them, by being oppressed and afflicted like them, making his own their griefs and sorrows (Is 53, 4-11).

The Old Testament opens with an account of creation, with man as its centre of gravity, its focal point. Due to man's sin a centrifugal process sets in. Wishing to gather men together in one family, God chooses Israel to play a mediating role. God's plan is to be recalled by the observance of the Sabbath-day, the Sabbath-year and the Jubilee — the Sabbath of Sabbaths. But economic oppression by a king brings about rebellion and disunity, and this break is sealed by a cultic and credal innovation, by apostasy. Oppression gradually becomes a widespread sin in Israel and consequently God rejects Israel's liturgy — the unifying act of the nation. Israel will no longer have prophets and eventually lose its mediating function.

10. X. LÉON-DUFOUR (ed.), *Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1967), p. 386, col. 1.

A messianic hope, however, sustains the faithful remnant — a hope that will be fulfilled in Jesus.

Jesus and His Disciples

In recent writings, exegetes have tried to throw greater light on the special concern Jesus has for the poor, the oppressed, the marginal people of his society. Theologians have tried to work out a liberation Christology. Hence I shall not dwell much on this point. However, two things need to be said. First, the Spirit, whose Pentecostal appearance will be the reversal of the tower of Babel, who will unite the disciples of Jesus into one body, the Church, is given to Jesus that he may once again proclaim the Jubilee (Lk 4, 18-19). St John describes "Jesus' death as his handing over the spirit — seemingly a symbolic way of indicating that Jesus' own Spirit will now take up the work of Jesus."¹¹ Second, Jesus is not only *for* the poor, he is also *with* them by being poor like them.¹² He eats and drinks with them, and thus annoys those in authority (Mk 2, 16). His death is the result, partly at least, of his identifying himself with the oppressed of his times.

The Spirit of Jesus continues his work and gathers together his disciples to form one community, the Church. We have a short description of this new community that deserves careful scrutiny :

- A: And all who believed were together
- B: and they had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as had any need.
- C: And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread together in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts,
- D: praising God and having favour with all the people.
- E: And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved (Acts 2, 44-7, RSV).

To me this is a very dynamic text, having a definite thrust. (A) First comes faith in Jesus, the Liberator. (B) This faith, by bringing the disciples close to Jesus, brings them closer to each other. Thus they are deeply concerned for one another and readily share their goods, so that "there was not a needy person among them" (Acts 4, 34). This was possible because faith in Jesus had truly liberated them, making them free from attachment to things of this world, so that

11. R. E. BROWN, *The Gospel According to St John* (New York, Doubleday, 1970), p. 913.

12. I have studied this point more fully elsewhere. Cf. S. ANAND, "Some Missiological Implications of the Concept of Incarnation", and "A Prolegomenon to Theologizing in India Today", in *Vidyayoti*, January 1978, and February 1979, respectively.

"no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common" (Acts 4,32b). (C) This community of life finds its authentic celebration in the Eucharist, which is really a feast of love. (D) Their life of joyful sharing is a source of inspiration to others. They are truly witnessing to Jesus, who makes us joyful by liberating us from our selfishness. (E) As a result of this powerful witnessing and through the grace of God, others join them to form the one community of Jesus. We thus have: faith → sharing in love → authentic Eucharist → powerful witness → growth of the Church. This, I believe, is to be the norm for the Church for all times.

The Church and Her Churchmen

In his high-priestly prayer, Jesus prays that all who believe in him may be one as he and the Father are one, so that the world may believe that the Father has sent him (Jn 17, 21). Thus in the mind of Jesus, the unity of the Church is not an end in itself, because the Church is not an end in itself. This is quite clear from the fact that a little later he prays that the communion of love among his followers may be a sign that the Father loves the world (Jn 17, 23). The Church is essentially sent to be the sacrament "of a new presence of Jesus".¹³ All that the Church is, or rather, all that she is meant to be is in view of her mission, and so, "In a sense . . . the urgency for mission gains priority over concern for Church unity."¹⁴ Hence it follows that all who are engaged in the ecumenical task must have a clear idea of the mission of the Church in the world today.

The Church is sent to announce the Kingdom of God, to bring "the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence to transform humanity from within and make it new."¹⁵ In what way does humanity need to be renewed today? What is the sin of our times that separates man from man? What is it that prevents millions of men and women from being fully human, condemning them to "remain on the margin of life"?¹⁶ Pope Paul VI gives the answer:

famine, chronic disease, illiteracy, poverty, injustices in international relations and especially in commercial exchanges, situations of economic and cultural neo-colonialism sometimes as cruel as the old political colonialism.¹⁷

13. *Evangelii Nuntianti*, n. 15.

14. S. AMIRTHAM, art. cit., p. 90.

15. *Evangelii Nuntianti*, n. 18.

16. *Ibid.*, n. 30.

17. *Ibid.* cit.

And, hence, the Pope continues :

The Church ... has the duty to proclaim the liberation of millions of human beings ... many of whom are her own children ... the duty of assisting the birth of this liberation, of giving witness to it, of ensuring that it is complete. This is not foreign to evangelization.¹⁸

The Kingdom of God is not merely an eschatological reality, nor does it merely pertain to the spirit of man; and so "we have realized that the renewal of the Church and its concern for mission in the world involves a new concern for man and his struggles to be human."¹⁹ What separates man from man today is not heresy, but "heretical structures" through which man exploits man. Hence it is not surprising that

The future of Ecumenism will depend upon the creation of an egalitarian society, the formation of a world government starting with an international just economic order, the creation of jobs for all the unemployed people of the world, readiness of the rich in each country to share their resources for productive purposes for the benefit of the poor, the insistence of the Churches to have economic sharing as a prelude to the eucharistic sharing. ...²⁰

If we do not ensure that "ecumenism frees every man and woman from bondage at all levels",²¹ then "the unity of the Church will not be of much use".²²

Ecumenical theologians have given great importance to the Eucharist, "the most spectacular gesture"²³ of a united Church. One scholar, who has been a keen observer of the progress made by the various joint theological study commissions, sounds a very optimistic note :

The Spirit seems to be guiding the Churches to labour unremittingly — and this as a primary task for all of them, a task that brooks no delay — towards the removal of the remaining obstacles which still prevent us from coming together as brothers around the Table of the Lord. The day seems to be finally dawning when the Eucharist will cease to be a sacrament of

18. Loc. cit.— More and more church leaders are becoming conscious of the urgency of the Church involving herself in the struggle for justice. Cf., for instance, the reports about the meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (VINDHYA-JYOTI, April 1978), the First Bishops' Institute of Missionary Activities (Ibid., May-June, 1979), the Asian Theological Conference (Ibid., July 1979), and the International Congress on Mission (Ibid., February 1980).

19. M. ZACHARIAH, op. cit., p. vii.

20. Geevarghese MAR OTHATHIOS, "The Indian Response to Ecumenism: An Orthodox View", Ibid., p. 44.

21. A. C. DHARMARAJ, "The Indian Response to Ecumenism: A Protestant View", Ibid., p. 49.

22. T. V. PHILIP, "Church Unity Discussions in India", Ibid., p. 99.

23. G. FLOROVSKY, "Obedience and Witness", in R. C. MACKIE and C. C. WEST (eds), *The Sufficiency of God* (London, SCM, 1963), p. 62; quoted by OTHATHIOS, art. cit., p. 32.

division to become once again what it was always meant to be: the sign and source of Christian unity.²⁴

Can we be so optimistic? Are we really moving towards an authentic ecumenical Eucharist? To bring this about, is it enough that we agree upon a common Eucharistic theology and accept the validity of the Orders of the Churches concerned? I do not think so!

To celebrate the Eucharist, we must come together "as brothers around the Table of the Lord": Can we do that? Can a rich landlord really be a brother to the coolies who for years have been working on his land without owning an inch of land themselves? Can a housewife who owns a car, a T.V., and what not, really be a sister to her maid, who is overworked, underpaid, and perhaps sexually exploited by her husband?²⁵ Can children who wear a clean set of clothes everyday be brothers and sisters to those "urchins" who parade the same set of clothes for days together? Can all these really come together as brothers and sisters around the Table of the Lord? Can they really say that the love of Christ has brought them together? Can they sing: *Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor*? I am not sure!

And what about the bread to be eucharistized? Is it really the fruit of our labour, or the booty of our exploitation? Can we really offer to the Lord the bread grabbed from the poor, bought with money that ought to have been given to others as rightful wage of their labour? This does make me feel uneasy! Will not the Lord repeat the strong condemnation of our offering as he did in the Old Testament? In the Eucharistic liturgy we recite the Lord's Prayer: "... Give us today our daily bread...". Are we praying only for ourselves or also for our neighbours? Do we really want the Lord, the common Father of all, to give them daily bread? Does not the Father want to give them this bread also through us?

The Eucharist is the memorial of the death of Jesus. In the past many Christians laid down their lives for their faith, seeing in martyrdom a close imitation of Jesus who laid down his life for us. There have been times in the history of the Church when Christians belonging to one denomination have persecuted and even killed those of other denominations. Today some Christians are killing others,

24. A. M. BERMEJO, *The Eucharist of the Risen Lord* (Poona, Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth, 1974, cyclostyled notes), pp. iii-iv.

25. It was not without reason that the CBCI Labour Commission organised a survey to study the real conditions of domestic workers. Cf. *The Report of the General Meeting of the CBCI*, Mangalore, January 9-17, 1978 (New Delhi, CBCI Centre, 1978), p. 74.

not due to credal differences, but because the latter have taken a firm stand against all forms of exploitation of the poor. Reporting the funeral of Archbishop Oscar A. Romero of San Salvador, who was shot dead while offering Mass on the 24th March, 1980, one weekly makes the following comment :

The violent funeral, like Romero's assassination, was a tragic demonstration of how even the Church has become a political battleground in predominantly Roman Catholic El Salvador. Of the country's five surviving bishops, only one had seen fit to attend Romero's funeral. . . . The country's priests are also divided between active, largely urban adherents of so-called liberation theology, and conservative, mostly rural guardians of the status quo.²⁶

On the eve of Romero's funeral, bishops from several countries issued a statement. I quote some relevant passages :

His death is not an isolated event. . . . It underscores the many crosses that mark the death of peasants, workers, students, priests, lay ministers, religious men and women, and even bishops, jailed, tortured or killed for professing their faith in Jesus Christ and for loving the poor. . . . We want to complete the unfinished Mass of Archbishop Romero, a martyr of the liberation that the Gospel demands.²⁷

Yes, all of us who profess to be disciples of Jesus, are called to complete the unfinished Mass of Romero. His commitment to justice did bring the desired goal of unity within the Church. During the third general meeting of the bishops of Latin America, forty bishops writing to Romero said :

In solidarity we have for the last two years followed the evolution of your commitment to the poor. . . . We are aware that in this task the Cross is your daily companion. . . . We deeply rejoice that this liberating action has borne fruit in your diocese through an ever greater union between priests, religious men and women, and lay people.²⁸

To commit ourselves to justice is to accept the Cross of Jesus as our permanent companion — and this alone can unite us who profess to be his followers.

In the Christian tradition, the Eucharist celebrated on Sundays came to have a very special significance,²⁹ Sunday being the day of the Lord, the original feast day.³⁰ Christians were instructed to keep it holy. For many to fulfil the Sunday obligation merely means to attend the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper. But, if we keep in mind

26. *The Time*, April 14, 1980, p. 19.

27. Quoted by *The Examiner*, April 19, 1980, p. 244.

28. Quoted by *Informations catholiques internationales*, April 15, 1980, p. 60.

29. Vatican II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 42.

30. *Ibid.*, n. 106.

the origin of the Sabbath, it becomes clear that a Christian guilty of injustice towards the poor does not fulfil his Sunday obligation just by going to Mass.

Our reflection on the mystery of the Church as the community sent by Jesus to be his eucharistic presence in the world leads us to conclude that commitment to social justice is at the core of her mission. Therefore all efforts at Church-unity must seriously accept the call "to proclaim the liberation of millions of human beings", and the duty "of giving witness to it". Yes, we need to proclaim and to witness. In recent years Church-leaders of different denominations have done quite a bit of proclamation about social justice. Younger theologians and churchmen are particularly sensitive to this area. We do speak and write a lot about social justice. We seek to organize workers so that they can fight for their rights, etc. And yet the ecumenical movement is at a standstill. Why?

I tried to answer this question at the very start by saying that, though we have talked much about social justice, we have not *really* committed ourselves to it. To put it differently, we do a lot of proclamation in words, but we do not witness by our life. Let me quote a writer who may give the impression of being impatient with the Church and with churchmen :

No doubt in recent times she (the Church) has come out with quite a few radical statements but they are not matched by any corresponding practice. Besides, verbal radicalism on the part of the church leaders is often a convenient substitute for subversive praxis, a pathetic attempt to delude themselves and the rest of the world into believing that they are true to their mission.³¹

I myself am a churchman, and I have known quite many churchmen in India for about twenty years, and for some years have been involved in the formation of future churchmen, and I am inclined to agree with the author just cited. I have the impression that we churchmen in India as a class — a class we surely are — belong to the very small minority that has all the comforts of life,³² and as such, even if we are not directly involved in exploitation — which is not that clear — we are definitely benefitting by an unjust society. We may not have funds for the poor, or even for those lay people who serve our institutions; we may claim that our institutions are not profit-making; yet we always have funds when we want, and we try to rationalize our stand by saying that these funds are

31. S. KAPPEN, "The Church as the Bearer of New Values", in M. ZACHARIAH, *Seeking Christ in India Today* (Nagpur, Study Department, NCCI, 1979), p. 57.

32. Bede GRIFFITHS, writing in *The Examiner*, March 22, 1980, maintains that "the standard of life of most of our religious institutions is that of the 15% of the rich in India" (p. 179).

earmarked for some definite purpose!³³ Our approach to our emotional and spiritual needs gives the impression that, unlike the vast majority of our fellowmen, we can get our bread and butter without putting in strenuous work. We can spend long hours in talking, sharing, in interpersonal relationships. . . . Some of us even need to travel hundreds of miles to make our annual retreat! Our celebrations, even when we claim that they are modest, give the impression that we have surplus resources in terms of men, money and time. Our leisure puts us in the upper class of our society: for instance, when we go for a movie, we sit in the first class or the balcony! Of late our concern for arranging seminars and refresher courses gives the impression that we have a bottomless pool of funds.³⁴ I could go on!

The ecumenical movement calls for conversion, a renewal in the Church.³⁵ Dom Helder Camara, another Latin American Archbishop, maintains that "There is a theory that can be historically proved: before undertaking reforms in depth, the Church has always had to come to terms with poverty."³⁶ If the commitment to social justice is an essential part of the mission of the Church, and if the unity that we desire is to be at the service of this mission, then the Church and her churchmen must not only be FOR the poor, but must BE poor, and not merely poor in spirit (Mt 5, 3), but just poor (Lk 6, 20).

33. Lest I sound harsh and immature, let me quote a prominent church leader of India. In his foreword to the revised edition of *Personnel in Church-related Institutions* (Madras, CBCI Labour Commission, 1980), Lawrence CARDINAL PICACHY complains that though the first edition of this book contained guidelines, "the changes of attitudes are very slow. In fact, many still think that the employee has to be grateful to the employer; and to be content with the wages and other conditions of work; for, while so many are unemployed, the employer has done him a favour in giving him a job. . . ." This, to me, sounds like a rich landlord of one of our villages speaking. And a little further, the Cardinal continues: "Many are apt to complain that their financial resources are limited and hence they are unable to revise pay scales. This is a fallacious argument. We often deceive ourselves by these arguments. We are prepared to pay more for everything, except to our workers: Why?" (pp. v-vi).

34. Cf. the rather biting article of Fr FIDELIS, O.F.M., "The Bottomless Pool", in *The Examiner*, September 17, 1977, p. 551.

35. Vatican II, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, n. 7.

36. J. DE BROUCKER, *Dom Helder Camara* (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1970), p. 5.

A Pioneer in Christian-Muslim Relations: Victor Courtois, S.J. (1907-1960)

Christian W. TROLL, S.J.

VATICAN II has inaugurated a new era in Catholic-Muslim relations. The WCC on its part, over the last fifteen years or so, has moved a large part of Protestant and Orthodox Christianity into a similar direction. International and local multi-religious and bilateral meetings of various kinds and on different levels have generated a movement aiming at a deeper mutual understanding, at cooperation and even at a kind of spiritual communion among believers beyond the frontiers of religious allegiance. In the beginning most of the initiatives were taken by Christian individuals and institutions. Today, in many places, Muslims reciprocate fully or even take the initiative.

It would however betray a grave lack of historical perception to forget or deny that the new beginning made in the 1960's has its roots in previous developments. It owes in fact not a little to the outstanding efforts of earlier pioneers in the field.

In the Indian Subcontinent, no doubt, Fr Victor Courtois, S.J., has been the outstanding Catholic pioneer in fostering better Christian-Muslim relations. He was the first to make the modern Catholic Church in India aware of the Muslim dimension of its apostolic task. He has put before her the vision of a new kind of relationship with Islam. Almost single-handedly, he has tried, in teaching and writing, to inform Christian leaders about Islam and to create in them an attitude of openness and empathy towards the Muslims. Moreover he did reach out to countless Muslims in personal contact, by participating in Muslim cultural activities and, last but not least, through the widely-read *Notes on Islam*, which he published and very largely wrote himself.

Today, two decades after his untimely death, the truly prophetic message of his life continues to claim attentive listeners. Those who follow him in the field have a duty to heed to his voice and to

resume the task where he left it. We have to respond to his message creatively, here and now.

I. *Some Biographical Data*¹

On the 21st December 1960 an altogether unexpected death took away Fr Victor Courtois, at the age of 53. Death surprised him preparing the Christmas of his beloved poor. The funeral ceremony brought around his tomb not only priests, nuns and school-children, but many poor people, working-class men and women and a representative deputation of Muslim divines and scholars.

Fr Courtois was born in Louvain on the 18th September 1907, and joined the Society of Jesus at the age of 19. From his school-days Victor had taken a keen interest in the Congo, then a colony of the kingdom of Belgium. He intended to work there as a missionary. However, when a companion of his in the Juniorate was prevented from going to India, Victor Courtois offered himself to the Superiors to take his place. Missionary work in India then was considered especially heroic, since it involved life-long separation from the homeland. He was accepted and started to study English forthwith.

Influenced by the distinguished priest and missiologist, Fr Pierre Charles S.J., Victor Courtois soon was on the look-out for a subject to specialize in. In the course of a seminar on Indian history, organized during the summer holidays in the Juniorate, he was given books on the Muslim period. This was an important landmark in his life; from that time on he dedicated himself to the apostolate among the Muslims.

In 1931 he came to India. During his regency, after one year of teaching in St Xavier's, Calcutta, he left for the Near East to study Arabic. In 1937 he began theology in St Mary's, Kurseong. In 1939 he was ordained. During the four years of his theological studies he deepened his knowledge of Islamic thought and started writing on Islamic subjects. Already as a student of theology, he began building up a library and collected information. He was able to send a much appreciated report about the Muslim world to Fr Ledochowski, then General of the Jesuits, who had asked for it.

After Tertianship he spent one year in Kidderpore, applying himself to the study of Urdu. Subsequently he taught Islamic Culture in St Xavier's College, Calcutta. He also did several months of

1. *Calcutta Calling*, November-December 1961, pp. 10-14.

intensive study in Lucknow, in close contact with young Muslim students.

In his obituary we read : "He loved 'his' Muslims; he made himself so wonderfully one of them that all his friends teasingly but lovingly called him 'Maulvi Saheb' or 'Father Maulvi'; his reddish beard, his knowledge of Muslim manners and etiquette, and, much more, his constant devotion to all Muslims in a spirit of delicate Christian zeal and charity fully justified his familiar nickname."²

At the end of 1944, Fr Courtois joined the newly-founded Calcutta Oriental Institute of the Society of Jesus, and became the soul of its Islamic Section. From 1944 till 1960, first in collaboration with two other priests, then alone, Fr Courtois devoted most of his time and energy to this work.

It is not surprising, given the nature of his work, that many aspects of it remained largely unknown and were fully appreciated by a few close collaborators only. His apostolate was primarily one of "presence" in the midst of the Islamic world. He had many friends in the most influential and cultured Islamic circles; they loved and esteemed him. Thus, for instance he became the Secretary of the Calcutta "Iran Society" and later its President. In 1959 the Iran Government presented him with the Silver Medal. For the same society he edited in 1951 the well-received *Al-Biruni Commemoration Volume*, and in 1956 the *Avicenna Commemoration Volume*. He spoke at many cultural Muslim functions in colleges and institutions. Another aspect of his work was his regular lecturing on Islam in theological colleges and seminaries, at Kurseong, Ranchi, Poona, Allahabad, Barisal, etc. Another still was the pastoral care of a number of converts from Islam. But what absorbed his energy most and is perhaps his most lasting contribution was the editing and writing of the *Notes on Islam*, which he pursued for more than thirteen years.

II. Christian-Muslim Relations in the Notes on Islam

1. Description of the Notes on Islam

The first issue of the periodical *Notes on Islam* (hereafter *Notes*) appeared on September 25, 1946, i.e. before partition and independence. Its full title reads : *Notes on Islam. A Bulletin of Information about Islam with Special Reference to India*. From volume I, n. 2 (July, 1947) onwards, it carried the subtitle : *A Help to Social Workers*,

2. Ibid., p. 12.

Teachers and Missionaries for a Better Appraisal of Islamic Culture and Modern Movements. Fr Courtois knew that "the missionaries and ecclesiastical students feel the need of reliable information about the faith and the aspirations of those many Muslims with whom they daily come into contact."³ From January 1951 onwards, when the periodical became a bimonthly and appeared in a highly improved fashion, the subtitle simply read thus : *A Help to a Better Appraisal of Islamic Culture.* From 1953 onwards the *Notes* became a quarterly. From the early 1950's onwards, when the editor became free again to pursue his studies of Islamic culture, the *Notes*, in their new shape, joined the big circle of specialized periodicals; an increasing number of scholars and students of Islam, Muslim and non-Muslim, took interest in the bulletin : it had become an indispensable instrument for whosoever wanted to understand Islam and its evolution in the sub-continent of India and Pakistan; it remained the faithful companion of College Professors, Social Workers and others who came in daily contact with Muslims.⁴

2. Aim and Spirit of the Notes

The foremost objective of the *Notes* was to acquaint the reader with "what Islam is, whence it comes and whether it goes, ... to present the Religion of the Quran as objectively as possible, its institutions, its beliefs, its evolution."⁵ The *Notes* deliberately strove "to remain expository and abstain from polemics",⁶ "to avoid", in other words, "all unpleasant controversy".⁷ "Enlightened knowledge must needs take away the sharp sting of prejudice and open the way to more sympathy and regard."⁸

The editor of the *Notes* was well aware of the heavy and painful legacy of past controversy and polemics. "The fact that both Christian and Muslim apologists have said crazy things about each other in the past is no reason to perpetuate that wrong."⁹ The wars of the Crusades and the spirit they generated must be once and for all consigned to the past. Instead, today we should "vie with the weapons of charity : they conquer without causing harm."¹⁰

3. *Notes on Islam*, September 1946, p. 1.

4. Cf. *ibid.*, December 1957, p. 129.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Notes*, July-August 1948, p. 77.

7. *Ibid.*, November 1952, p. 1.

8. *Ibid.*, January 1952, p. 1.

9. *Ibid.*, June 1953, p. 48.

10. *Ibid.*, March 1955, p. 1.

In 1955 Fr Courtois introduces the great philosopher and lay missionary Ramon Llull (1232-1315), member of the third order of St Francis, to his readers. He remarks :

Llull knew well that men's hearts and minds are not conquered by the sword; love and mutual understanding are far more powerful weapons: they subdue without hurting.... Ramon Llull, therefore, studied Islam trying always to discover not what divides but what unites. It is the spirit which must be revived today, a spirit of intellectual fairness and charity. Prejudices, indeed, against one another are still many among Christians and among Muslims; untrue or grossly distorted statements disparaging the other's religious belief or practice are still found in books of recent dates or heard in conversations in Christendom as well as in the world of Islam.¹¹

Fr Courtois was convinced that in the long run this new way of proceeding will work a profound change in Christian-Muslim relations. Such a study and presentation of Islam will lead to greater love and better appreciation of the Muslims. In teaching Islam, Fr Courtois stresses (when presenting a plan for the study of Islam in the context of ecclesiastical studies), "insistence should always be made not on what separates Christians from Muslims but on what may rapproach them, bring them closer to each other and to the heart of Christ. We study them not as enemies but as Brothers. To study we shall add much prayer."¹² Fr Courtois was convinced that "the discreet fruit of mutual understanding and knowledge must needs be mutual friendship."¹³

Thus, in the editor's words :

The *Notes* aim at much more than 'co-existence' between Muslims and non-Muslims — co-existence is only a synonym for toleration, a negative concept. The *Notes* endeavour to bring about mutual esteem, nay brotherly love between Muslims and non-Muslims, be they Hindus, Christians or Jews. It is a brotherly love, indeed, that the common Father of all men, God Almighty, desires to be burning in the hearts of all the members of the big human family.¹⁴

Earlier, in summer 1948, he had written in a more exhortative vein — at that time the *Notes* had practically no Muslim readership yet — : "It would be grand if the Muslims could realize that they have in the Christians of today not merely the descendants of the Crusaders with whom their knights crossed swords, but brothers, real brothers, big brothers who are eager to tell them the way to the only true *renovation*, to guide them on to the One who is the source of life."¹⁵ May the *Notes* "hasten the day when Muslims and

11. *Ibid.*, June 1955, p. 49.

12. *Ibid.*, May-June 1949, p. 60.

13. *Ibid.*, November 1951, p. 113.

14. *Ibid.*, December 1957, p. 130.

15. *Ibid.*, July-August 1948, p. 77.

Christians will make one big family under the benevolent leadership of Jesus, the son of Mary."¹⁶

Such a sustained effort towards "a friendly exchange of views with the idea of bringing about mutual understanding and concord"¹⁷ must not be confused with "the tendency of some well-intentioned speakers to slip over difficult problems: to ignore the differences between Islam and Christianity is not to solve them, nor is it a step towards better mutual understanding. These difficulties must be faced squarely in order to be understood and appreciated."¹⁸ The *Notes* did in fact express at times apprehension regarding particular events or trends observed in the Muslim world. They did not hesitate to point out instances of a relapse into unenlightened, polemical debate.

From the early 1950's onwards we notice in Fr Courtois a sharpened awareness of a common foe of all religions, i.e. "materialism with its offshoot, communism".¹⁹ In a few places he even adopts the language of a spiritual crusade against these forces, a language not uncommon in ecclesiastical documents of that period. He impresses, e.g., upon his Christian and Muslim readers "the necessity of joining forces in defence of the spiritual values in the world", to join hands "in this mighty campaign", "this sacred enterprise".²⁰ The fear of militant atheism, as promoted by political communism, was in fact *one* of the elements that lead to the first "Muslim-Christian Conversations" in the late 1950's and to the first common call to a proposed "collaboration . . . against the common enemy of Islam and Christianity and all believers in God, materialistic atheism".²¹

Yet the mainspring for Fr Courtois' call for a wider ecumenism between religions, and especially between Christians and Muslims, lay deeper, in a clear perception of what unites all men most profoundly: the common Fatherhood of God, which in turn he clearly perceived as the basis for the brotherhood of all men which he tried to make a lived reality. Again and again in his editorials, he called to memory that all men are "the children of the same Heavenly Father whom both (Muslims and Christians) mean to love and serve."²² Because of this basic truth Muslims and Christians "have to meet on religious grounds"; they have, in other words, "to meet at the feet of God

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*, June 1957, p. 55.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*, November 1952, p. 125.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, June 1957, p. 51.

22. *Ibid.*, May-June 1949, p. 60. Cf. *ibid.*, November 1951, p. 113; January 1952, p. 1; June 1957, p. 51.

to realize that they are brethren, children of the same Heavenly Father".²³

An other reality of faith which Fr Courtois stressed much, is the Heart of Christ, as the centre of the hearts of men and the fulfilment of their deepest aspirations. In the presentation of the *Notes* in 1946, Fr Courtois, addressing "those whose calling it is to be other Christs", remarked that Muslims "are waiting for their hearts to be healed by the virtue which issues forth from the heart of Christ — those hearts capable of so much generosity, afire with so much zeal for the name of the Only God, treasuring unawares immense reserves of love."²⁴ We find in fact, on these very first pages of the *Notes*, a remarkable openness to "the riches of those (Muslim) hearts", an openness which leads Fr Courtois to wish "that in them we may recognize the features of our Heavenly Father and love them as Brothers. Were they better known, they would surely be better loved, and where there is love, there is also God. *Ubi Caritas et Amor, Deus ibi est.*"²⁵

3. The Content of the Notes

The two main recurring sections of the *Notes* were "Islamica" and "Muslim News Digest". The Muslim News Digest was substantial and presented news under the headings: Politics, Economics and Social Questions, General Culture, Education and Religion. But these events and trends, the editor remarked in one of his editorials, "which capture the headlines in the Muslim papers are prone to make one overlook other problems of a deeper significance for the future of the Muslim nations of the world: they are problems that reach to the very principles and foundations of the faith of Islam."²⁶ In order to inform and stimulate reflection on these deeper problems, the *Notes* would present regularly short articles on the origin and development of Islam, its beliefs and injunctions, institutions and folklore, including notes on Muslim feasts and significant dates and places of Muslim everyday-life. These articles did not aim at presenting original research but rather at providing lucidly basic information culled from reliable secondary source material and oral information.

The editor perceived Islam as the international and comprehensive political, social and religious reality it has remained till today. He did not succumb to the temptation, common among westerners, to stress certain aspects of the reality of Islam (as e.g. the legal or the

23. Ibid., June 1957, p. 51.

24. Ibid., September 1946, p. 1.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid., September 1952, p. 101.

mystical or the doctrinal) disproportionately, at the cost of other aspects. He did not read into Islam the modern western separation of Church and State.

He, further, had a keen perception of the living and dynamic character of Islam and of "the profound revolution which is slowly changing the Muslims' *Weltanschauung*".²⁷ Repeatedly he speaks of the revival of Islam which he observes everywhere and in all spheres of the Islamic world. This revival, he remarks, gives the lie to all those who even recently declared Islam to be caught up in an irreversible process of disintegration. Islam had been thought wrongly to be dead. A true Muslim Renaissance has begun.²⁸

In his personal comments, added here and there to pieces of information, Fr Courtois could be outspoken, if not a little school-masterly, in a way an outside observer of things Islamic today would hardly dare to be. Take, for instance, this passage written in September 1952 :

The present Muslim world has been so engrossed in economic pursuits, in political and social reforms, in the fight for existence, that it has had no time for quiet thinking. Where, indeed, are the Ibn Sina, the Ibn Rushd, the Ghazzali, the Al-Biruni and scores of theologians, philosophers and scientists of the heyday of Islam? Unless the modern generation returns to the feet of these great masters and accept to be taught once more how to think, love God and his creation Man, the modern achievements will fizzle through the darkness of the night like the rocket on Diwali Day.²⁹

Such comments, presumably, did not hurt as they came from a source sympathetic to Muslims, beyond any doubt. May we add that here and in general the editor may not have given sufficient thought to the humiliation and suffering inflicted upon the Muslim world by colonial rule and to the destruction under it of much of the means and institutions that had formed the basis of the living intellectual tradition of the Islamic world.

To the two main sections mentioned above were added "Notes on Islamic Culture". These mostly consisted in presenting attractive life sketches of outstanding Muslim scholars, writers, poets, etc., of former ages. There is for instance an interesting series on Muslim geographers. Here, the editor's activity in the Iran Society bore rich fruit. Furthermore, there were regularly articles on modern movements like the Ahmadiyyah, Bahaism, and on recent developments in the Khoja and Bohra communities. There was the Survey of Periodicals and of books recently published. There was a section

27. Ibid., March 1959, p. 1.

28. Ibid., March 1951, p. 17.

29. Ibid., September 1952, p. 101.

on Documents and one entitled "Rays of Light" which extracts quotations from Sufi writings and prayer collections; finally there were articles on pioneers of Christian-Muslim encounter like Ramon Llull (1232-1335) and Jerome Xavier (1549-1617), on the occasion of Fr Arnulf Camps' masterly thesis on the subject.

4. Presenting Christ to Muslims

One year after the first appearance of the *Notes*, Fr Courtois mentions in an editorial the request made by some readers, for the inclusion of apologetical notes that would help to present Christianity to the Muslims. In response Fr Courtois produced a *Supplement* to the *Notes* on "Isa ibn Maryam"; later, in 1952, he wrote a substantial article in the *Notes* on "Mary in Islam" (reprinted in booklet form in 1954, by the Oriental Institute, Calcutta). But the *Notes* deliberately refrained from presenting Christian teaching to its readers (a good number of whom, by now, were Muslims). They also refrained from discussing the problems of how to present the Christian message to Muslim enquirers.

This is not to say that Fr Courtois did not see the urgency of this task, nor that he left it undone! Already in 1946 he had published a substantial, and still relevant, article on "Islam and Conversion"³⁰ in which he discussed "the main difficulties" (theological, legal, psychological) and explained the demands of that apostolate. Six years later he again dealt with this question in "Christ and Muslims".³¹ In this article he presented an outline of instructions to be given to Muslim enquirers. This outline was fully developed in his Catechism, *The Christian Doctrine: An Exposition*, published in 1954.³² There he explains: "This is primarily intended as a catechism for enquirers and catechumens; but it may also serve a wider purpose and provide Muslim readers in general with a concise and objective exposition of Christian beliefs."³³ Whereas "the little bulletin *Notes on Islam* aims at a better appraisal of Islamic Culture and is destined to Christians in search of information about the Religion of Arabia, the present book may help the Muslims to a better appraisal of Christian things and of the Christian faith as it is taught by the body especially commissioned by Jesus Christ to spread his message, the Catholic Church."³⁴

30. *THE CHURCH MONTHLY*, July 1946, pp. 1-14.

31. *INDIAN MISSIONARY BULLETIN*, Vol. I, n. 1 (1952), pp. 66-75.

32. Calcutta: The Oriental Institute, 1954, pp. x-196; revised 2nd edition, 1959, pp. viii-184.

33. *Ibid.*, p. iii.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. iii-iv.

Fr Courtois' writings in this field are worth studying to this day. Very little work has been done in this field by Catholic authors.

III. *Some Reflections*

(a) The *Notes on Islam* turned out to be a great success. The number of readers grew constantly. It gained international recognition and was increasingly read by Muslims as well. I have met a number of Muslims on whom Fr Courtois has made a lasting impression through his *Notes*. They spontaneously talked to me about him and the *Notes*. I do not, however, have any statistical data as to what was the number and composition of the *Notes*' readership and whether, in the course of the years of publication there took place a significant change in the composition of its readership. Did the periodical maintain the readership of social workers, religious and priests, while it gained ground among more academically inclined readers and among Muslims?

(b) Fr Courtois kept strictly to the initial objective of the *Notes*: For a Better Appraisal of Islamic Culture. Simultaneously he worked, reflected and wrote to promote a better knowledge of Christ and his teaching among Muslims. God used him to bring some Muslims to the full knowledge of Jesus the Christ, but Fr Courtois kept this work outside the sphere of the *Notes*. He did, however, discretely advertise in the *Notes* books about things Christian, including his own catechism.

(c) Fr Courtois did report about Christian-Muslim "conversations" that were the beginnings of what has now developed into the worldwide dialogue movement. He advocated Muslim-Christian co-operation and reported on its earliest developments. But, as we have seen, he did not promote or discuss in the *Notes* the apostolate of proclamation of the faith.

(d) Taken as a whole, the work of Fr Courtois strikes one as having been extremely well-planned and of one piece. There is a remarkable synthesis in his writings of apostolic zeal and prudence, of frankness and flexibility, of truthfulness and love.

(e) He did not find a successor. With his death publication of the *Notes on Islam* was discontinued, and they have not been revived till today. For years his library fell a prey to dust and worms. Only recently has it been taken care of by the St Xavier's College Library. His was the fate of the grain hidden in the ground. My prayer is that the green wheat blade may soon appear and that it may bear abundant fruit among Christians and Muslims and all the people of India.

Are Mind-Transcending Experiences Self-Interpreting?

Richard DE SMET, S.J.

FOR many of our contemporaries, encountering cultures and religions different from their own has become a frequent, matter-of-course, but still exciting and often disturbing event. The new type of nomadism which makes people wander all over the earth breaks down many cultural prejudices, self-defences and self-assurances. Long-established religious beliefs, goals and practices appear suddenly rivalled by those of other sections of the same mankind. But whereas in the past centuries the traveller easily clung to his own cultural identity and viewed the peculiarities of other lands as curious, exotic, strange or even outlandish and barbarous, the modern wanderer appears endowed with a new awareness of the unity of mankind and of the accidentality of its diversity, and with a readiness to share in, and to take hold of, man's common heritage.

However, this is not an easy venture. For, beyond superficial similarities of general purpose and basic attitudes, the great religions of the world stand structurally contrasted and conceptually different. The translatability of their notions and terms remains at best inadequate and ambiguous, as specialized scholars do not tire to remind us. Facile assimilations are self-defeating. Thus the world religions appear refractory to the ideal of human reconcilability.

Hence, in the eyes of some, their modern encounter and panoramic observability brings or should bring about their mutual cancellation. Man should push beyond them towards a religio-humanistic new philosophy. But many others are convinced that such an abandon would be a radical loss and the pursuit of that new philosophy would too likely flounder in vagueness and frustration. A good many of them opt for another course: they try to plunge themselves into various types of meta-conceptual experiences characteristic of diverse religions, with the hope that they will thus reach to the authentic experience of 'religion as such' beyond its contrasting kinds. This presupposes that there exists an authentic religious experience at least as a possible goal and, moreover, that the essential core of

religion consists in a meta-conceptual experience rather than, for instance, in 'Law' (*Dharma, Dāna, Agraphos Nomos, Fas, Tōrah, Tao*), in commitment to righteousness (*Islam*) or to devotion (*bhakti*) or to love of God and neighbour (*agapē*) or to God-originated faith, hope and love (*pistis, elpis, agapē*), or, again, in being the way (*mārga*) to salvation (*mokṣa, nirvāṇa*) from the round of rebirths (*samsāra*). The very length of this far from complete enumeration of traditionally admitted alternatives throws doubt on the validity of that postulate.

This is not to say that the end of religion may not be a meta-conceptual supreme and definitive experience (self-realization, blissful intuition of God, etc.), attainable in afterlife or even, some will say, during the course of this life (*jīvan-mukti*). But what the new trend focuses on is the quest for high-level experiences, either spontaneous or produced through some type of mental discipline or even through drugs, which are attainable in this life. Whether mystical, sufi or yogic (*samādhi, dhyāna, jhāna, zen-satori* but also T.M. etc.), they are felt with a vividness, a heightening of feeling, an immediacy and a transcendence which makes them highly valuable to their enjoyer. Hence, especially if he lacks critical distance, he is driven to consider them as ends-in-themselves and eventually as the very essence of religion. This deserves to be examined carefully.

Apart from being events of heightened feeling, have these experiences a reality-revealing content ? To answer this we must, it seems, analyze in turn the experiential event itself and its (either immediate or delayed) interpretation by the enjoyer himself.

The experience itself appears to be an event of transcendence (of the plurality of objects, persons, concepts, feelings and ego-references which usually fill up the field of ordinary consciousness). This transcendence is more or less thorough for, in its lower degrees, it admits of mental images, smells, sounds, etc., and impressions of supernormal powers — catalogued by yoga as *vibhūtis* — but, at its best, all the modifications of the mind are kept in abeyance. Transcendence, however, implies two aspects: negation and elevation. As negation, it surmounts the manifold objects and intentionalities of ordinary consciousness; it sublates them and establishes itself in the void of pure consciousness. As elevation, it is a peak experience, not only due to its intensity of feeling, but because in this void the mind, reduced to its essential, constitutive intentionality for the real, faces reality above and beyond any of its determinations, in its universal supremacy. A mark of transcending experience is consequently complete apophatism of words and concepts.

But this apophatism is not impervious to a certain 'phatism', an effort of interpretation which, without ever cancelling it, attempts to extract from its hidden wealth elements of communicative information, somehow as one might try to translate an encephalogram in terms of intellectual consciousness. Such 'translations' exist in the past and present records of peak experiences and can be compared.

The trouble is that they differ widely, as already observed by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya in the 8th century. It may help to examine the situation as it presented itself to him. The transcending type of experience was cultivated in many of the various sects: Buddhists were practising *samādhi* in order to attain *prajñā* or *bodhi*; Sāṅkhya-yogins devoted themselves to *yoga* in view of the peak experience they called seedless concentration (*abīja samādhi*); Vedāntins followed the course of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, *nididhy-āsana* (hearing, reflecting, focusing), centred on the 'great sayings' (*mahā-vākya*) understood through the exegetical method of *bhōga-tyāga-lakṣaṇā*, in order to reach the *viññāna*-experience which Śaṅkara explained as *svānubhava-karaṇa*: "turning into one's own experience" the knowledge obtained through *śravaṇa* and *manana*;¹ or they concentrated on *Om*, as explained in Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad, to reach the *turīya* or fourth state which is the peak experience. It would appear arbitrary to pretend that Buddhist *prajñā*, Yoga *abīja-samādhi* and Vedānta *viññāna* were three different species of high-level experience; rather they were three names, conceptually hardly distinct, for the same metempirical transcending experience.

But their interpretations were sharply diverse. Hinayāna Buddhists explained *prajñā* as simply the realization that all conditioned (pseudo-)realities are imbued with sorrow, impermanent and void of any *ātman*, and the unconditioned *nirvāṇa* is the cooling and cessation (*nirodha*) of the fires of desire arising from wrong knowledge about them. Thus what they expressed of the peak experience was its aspect of negation as transcending. The Śūnyavādins opposed them in viewing it with Nāgārjuna as absolute negation without anything to transcend. But the Viññānavādins found this view too radical and interpreted *prajñā* as the realization of the non-dual, homogeneous (*ekarśa*: of one savour) *ālaya-viññāna* (receptacle-consciousness) into which all phenomena have been reduced to their perfect nature (*pariṇiṣpanna svabhāva*) as dreams that vanish into the subconscious. Thus, for them, the experience transcended all mental modifications (which are dream-like), and by its quality of being 'of one savour' revealed only the subconscious (the *ālaya-viññāna*), not any perceiver

1. *Bhagavad-Gītā Bhāṣya*, 6, 8; 7, 2; 9, 1.

or any transcendent Consciousness. The emphasis of their interpretation was again on the negative aspect of the metaphysical experience.

The Sāṅkhya-Yoga interpretation did take account of its elevation aspect. It said that, by transcending negatively all the modifications of the intellect and the intellect itself, the experiencer isolated his own individual but eternal, ubiquitous, inactive and undifferentiated spirit (the *puruṣa* or *jīva*), one among many similar *puruṣas* but absolute within its own individual field.

Śaṅkara, the prince of Vedāntins, presented an interpretation contrary to all these and accounting more thoroughly for the two aspects, negation and elevation, of the transcending experience. Here, he said, the bearer of the "I"-notion, i.e., the intellect (*buddhi* or *manas*) or, if one prefers, the ego-sense (*ahaṁkāra*) is perceived in its naked state (attained through the rejection of all its modifications) as reflecting the *Sākṣin* (the absolute Witness or Overseer), i.e., the divine Absolute or *Brahman-Ātman*. And thus, by virtue of the reflection (*ābhāsa*) which actually constitutes it as 'conscious' intellect, it is mediately focused on the Absolute itself. This Absolute is experientially attained as the Prototype of that reflection, i.e., as "the self-effulgent Perception (*upalabdhi*), the Seeing (or the Eye), internally existent and actionless, the Overseer direct and interior to all, the Observer (*cetā*) which is constant, attributeless and non-dual".² The *vijñāna* experience is the personal discriminating of those three: the reflection-endowed intellect, that reflection as reflection of the *Sākṣin*, and the *Sākṣin* itself as the Original of that reflection.³

Śaṅkara, however, was keenly aware that the discriminatory aspect of this experience did not simply emanate from its psychological nature. No experience of that type, he concluded from the conflict of interpretations recorded above, was self-interpreting. Rather, interpretations were commanded by the previous convictions of the experiencers. For him *nididhyāsana* was not to be practised before both *śravaṇa* and *manana* had reached their termination. It was useless (*anartha*), so long as the mind had not received the *śruti*-teaching in full clarity and precision and exerted itself to the utmost in raising all possible doubts and solving them. Only when it had reached the state of intellectual peace and enlightened faith, which he defined as *citta-prasāde āstikya-buddhi* (conviction held in a pacified mind that [the Absolute] exists),⁴ could it attempt in yogic fashion to appropriate

2. *Upadeśa-sāhasrī*, I, 18, 26 and cf. 25-43; 107; 109-110.

3. Cf. *ibid.*, 120.

4. *Muṇḍaka Up. Bhāṣya*, 2.1.7.

(*svāmūbhava-karaṇa*) this conviction experientially. That which would be the proper interpretation of that experience had to be established (*prasiddhi*) before and independently of the experience itself by scriptural exegesis and rational argumentation.

Referring to the negative process in general (not precisely as constitutive of the transcending experience but as a method already necessary in *śravaṇa* and *manana*), Śaṅkara asks: "Should one let the ignorant grasp [*Ātman*] by some positive *pramāṇa* or [simply] by negating [all the non-*Ātman*] so that only what is other [than the non-*Ātman*] be the remainder. . . ? If you say that [negation suffices], it would follow that [*Ātman*] would be a void [*śūnyatā*], since no Overseer would have been established. . . . [Only] if a conscious being (*cetana*) different [from all the non-*Ātman*] had been established, would [the Overseer] be [established] in that way by the process of rejection".⁵ Śaṅkara was thus fully aware that, short of a scriptural-ratiocinative establishment (*prasiddhi*) of the *Brahman-Ātman* as the transcendent Overseer, prior to the apophatic experience, the experiencer would not be entitled to interpret it in positive terms but only in terms of utter void (*śūnya*).

But what about the other aspect of this experience, its elevation-aspect ? It is there but too obscure to provide by itself alone legitimacy to an interpretation in terms of *Ātman*, or God, or individual soul (*puruṣa*), etc. It can only provide experiential confirmation to a prior, rationally attained, ascertaining (*prasiddhi*) of the existence and essence of a real Existent, transcending as Super-subject all the objective contents of consciousness. That is to say, it is not self-interpreting.

The conclusion is that reason remains the arbiter. It may not be bypassed by fideistic faith and a rush to metempirical experience. The painful work of methodically doubting, searching for solutions, examining critically scriptural testimonies and philosophical arguments, and, if possible, establishing fully satisfactory positions (*siddhānta*) may not be set aside. Experience, however transcending, is no substitute for it. It can only crown it and this is its precious value.

5. *Upadeśa-sāhasri*, I, 18, 124-126.

Document

Address of Pope John Paul II to the Bishops of the Malabar and Malankara Rites in *Ad Limina* Visit (29 August 1980)

Venerable and dear Brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ,

1. I am very grateful to you for your visit today : it is indeed with great joy that I address my affectionate greeting to all of you who, together with Cardinal Joseph Parecattil, Archbishop of Ernakulam and President of the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Eastern Code of Canon Law, have come from different parts of India for this *ad limina* visit and for your collegial meeting.

2. In you I sense the presence here of *the whole Syro-Malabar Church*, this Eastern and authentically Indian Church which for centuries has been a marvel of Christian witness in fidelity to its primitive faith and to its legitimate traditions. And hence my greeting goes today to your entire Church : to the priests, to the men and women religious, to the members of Secular Institutes, to the young, to the old, to the fathers and mothers of families, to the workers, to the children and to all the faithful, especially those who are in sickness and in pain.

My greeting and good wishes go also to the faithful and Pastors of the other Churches who live alongside of you in the different parts of Kerala and in the rest of India, as well as to the brethren of the Christian communities which are not yet in full communion with us. They go likewise to all the members of the non-Christian religions.

3. In this collegial visit, I wish officially to express my gratitude for the diligent reports which you have placed at my disposal and at the disposal of my collaborators in the Apostolic See, for a greater knowledge of your Eparchies with their many clergy and religious. These Eparchies are teeming with pastoral and missionary activity : their activities are also manifested in the field of culture through colleges and schools, in the field of charitable and social assistance through hospitals and dispensaries, and wherever there is need to work for the human, social and spiritual advancement of your communities or of anyone without distinction of belief, race or rite. I have noted *your commitment, full of dedication and of love for all*. This is an honour and a duty for the whole Catholic Church, and this is also the task of your Church. It has always been so, and today especially this commitment shines with new lustre. I am happy to render testimony to your zeal.

4. This perspective of openness to all people without any distinction is a challenge to my own apostolic service, which is described by *Lumen Gentium* in these words: "He (Peter) presides over the whole assembly of charity and protects legitimate diversities, while at the same time seeing that such differences do not hinder unity but rather contribute towards it" (n. 13).

I have desired this encounter with you and I wish to thank you for the praiseworthy responsibility with which you have accepted the invitation of the Sacred Congregation to participate in a study meeting on the reform of the Sacred Liturgy of your own Church. This is a meeting from which it seems right to expect the happiest of results with respect to a *clear liturgical discipline and a liturgical renewal according to the directives and spirit of the Second Vatican Council*. You may be sure that the Successor of Peter, on every occasion, as in this fraternal encounter, has only one desire and proposal, that of being what the Council has called "the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity of the bishops and of the multitude of the faithful" (*Lumen Gentium*, 23).

5. What fundamentally does this encounter of ours and your collegial meeting with the competent Congregation of the Holy See look to if not to the realization of perfect communion in the lord of peace? *The Liturgy manifests and effects unity in an altogether special way*. "Liturgical actions are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the 'sacrament of unity', namely, a holy people united and organized under their bishops. Therefore liturgical actions pertain to the whole body of the Church: they manifest it and have effects upon it" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 26).

Besides setting forth with such vigour this general fundamental theological concept, the Council draws attention to other principles of the greatest importance: the Church desires to respect and foster in a special way "the spiritual adornments and gifts of the various races and peoples. Anything in their way of life that is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error she studies with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact. Sometimes, in fact she admits such things into the liturgy itself, as long as they harmonize with the true and authentic liturgical spirit" (ibid., 37). Moreover, *Lumen Gentium* states: "By divine providence it has come about that various Churches established in diverse places by the apostles and their successors have, in the course of time coalesced into several groups, organically united, which, preserving the unity of faith and the unique divine constitution of the universal Church, enjoy their own discipline, their own theological and spiritual heritage.... This variety of local Churches with one common aspiration is particularly splendid evidence of the catholicity of the undivided Church" (n. 23).

But at the same time the Council wishes these Churches to be faithful to their traditions: "For it is the mind of the Catholic Church that each individual Church or rite should retain its traditions whole and entire" while adjusting its way of life to the various needs of time and place" (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, 2). This same Decree also proclaims: "All Eastern rite members should know and be convinced

that they can and should always preserve their lawful liturgical rites and their established way of life, and that these should not be altered except by way of an appropriate and organic development" (ibid., 6).

To attain their aim it is necessary to have a rigorous and severe application of the conciliar directives on *fidelity to the traditions of one's own rite*: "Easterners themselves should honour all these things with the greatest fidelity. Besides, they should acquire an ever greater knowledge and a more exact use of them. If they have improperly fallen away from them because of circumstances of time or persons, let them take pains to return to their ancestral ways" (ibid., 6). Difficulties will not be lacking in the field of returning to the genuine sources of one's own rite. It is a question, nevertheless, of difficulties which must be faced *viribus unitis* and *Deo adiuvante*.

The liturgical renewal is hence the fundamental element for the ever fruitful life of your Church: a renewal founded on fidelity to your own genuine ecclesial traditions and open to the needs of your people, to your culture and to possible changes owing to your own organic progress. You will be usefully guided by the fundamental principles which are set out in the letter *Dominicae Cennae*, and which will assist you not to err in a matter that is so important and so delicate.

6. After these reflections on the Liturgy, I am pleased to speak about the Memorandum that you wished to make known to me through the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Churches. The content of this document, despite the brevity imposed on it by reason of circumstances, invites me to reflect on the history of your glorious Church, which in the free world is the Eastern Church that is most numerous and flourishing, the one with the greatest number of priests, men and women religious, seminarians and laity.

How can we fail to emphasize with joy and with true satisfaction the contribution of your Church to the cause of the missions, not only in India but also elsewhere, to the promotion of priestly and religious vocations, to the activities of teaching and of charitable assistance, etc.? There is no question of underestimating the many human factors that have their own influence in these phenomena, but rather of noting how these factors are also indebted to the Christian faith of your Syro-Malabar families, who are always open to giving their children to the cause of the universal Church even beyond the boundaries of your particular Church. I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to you the Bishops, to your priests, to the Religious, the members of Secular Institutes, the seminarians and the generous families, for what you have done and continue to do for the universal Church. What at one time the missionaries of Europe and America did and are still doing in *auxilium Orientalium*, you have done and are doing in *auxilium Ecclesiae Latinae*. I sincerely thank you. All of this is in perfect harmony with the spirit of the Council which wants the particular Churches to feel in their heart responsibility for the other Churches and for the universal Church.

7. After a glance at your Church, my thought turns to the *desiderata* that you have presented. The importance of what you

set forth, as well as the canonical, ecclesiological, pastoral, doctrinal and practical implications thereof, explain why it is not possible on this occasion to give an immediate and complete response to your proposals.

When there is a question of matters that concern the whole Church, and the creation of supra-episcopal structures in which the interest of different Bishops and particular Churches are involved, the Holy See adopts serious and wise procedures that are sanctioned by the practice of many centuries. I wish to assure you how happy I am to see that you are endeavouring to affirm and deepen your identity as a particular Eastern Church. I am pleased to quote here the thought of my great predecessor Paul VI in his concluding discourse at the 1974 Synod of Bishops: "However, while greater attention is paid to the particular Churches as an essential aspect of the ecclesial reality, we wish that all danger be carefully avoided of injuring the strong bond of communion with the other particular Churches and with the Successor of Peter, to whom Christ the Lord has entrusted the grave, perennial and loving task of tending the lambs and the sheep (Jn 21, 13-17), of strengthening his brothers (Lk 22, 32), of being the foundation and the sign of the unity of the Church (cf. Mt 16, 18-20)" (26 October 1974, *AAS* 66, p. 636).

With reference to some phrases of your Memorandum, I would like to recall an aspect of the collegial teaching of the Second Vatican Council: "In virtue of his office, that is, as Vicar of Christ and Pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme and universal power over the Church. And he can always exercise this power freely" (*Lumen Gentium*, 22). On the occasion of the above-mentioned Synod, Paul VI added: "there is in this only one intention, namely that, impelled by the greatest love, all may respond to the will of God, each faithfully fulfilling the office he has received" (*ibid.*). I wish, however to assure you that everything will be done, compatibly with the good of the universal Church and with the necessary gradualness.

8. In the same order of ideas there is also the problem of the assistance to your faithful outside your Eparchies. On the one hand my unforgettable predecessor John Paul I, in his brief pontificate, had the opportunity and joy of being able to appoint Archbishop Antony Padiyara as Apostolic Visitor for the Malabar faithful living in different regions of India outside the territories of Eastern jurisdiction. The Archbishop has striven with exemplary solicitude to fulfil the task entrusted to him, and I wish to express my gratitude to him *coram vobis*.

Also involved, on the other hand, in this question are the Papal Representative in India and the Latin Ordinaries of those places where these Malabar faithful are living. I can assure you that there will be rendered accessible to these faithful all the helps which the laws of the Church foresee, particularly by the prescriptions, which you yourselves have cited, of the Decree *Christus Dominus*. It is well known how, after the Council, the Church wished to revise the Apostolic Constitution *Exul Familia*, and my predecessor Paul VI

in *Pastoralis Migratorum Cura* did not omit any effort to place every spiritual help at the disposal of emigrants. The common concern of the Bishops of the emigrants' places of origin and the Bishops of their new homes requires a harmony of relationships and a spirit of fraternal collaboration. It is my most earnest desire, and my conviction, that the Episcopal Conferences, whether of India or the regional ones, will find a way to develop a just manner of providing for this need.

In this effort to help the most needy faithful, either spiritually or materially, the Malabar Bishops will find in the Holy See a sincere support and an animating force, which, in an ecclesial perspective that embraces the needs of the individual particular Churches and the common good of the whole Church, seeks to create a climate of mutual knowledge and esteem among all people, especially among the faithful of different races, nations and rites.

9. I would like to add yet a word about your Eparchies. I am not only thinking of your Church in terms of numbers, statistics and the outstanding activities of each of your Eparchies, but I am contemplating the rich spiritual life that exists therein.

I am thinking of your priests, so numerous and generous. I am thinking of the men Religious who are members of Eastern Institutes, as well as Orders and Congregations of Latin origin, and who are docile to the call of Christ and in the vanguard of the Church's life. I am thinking of the great numbers of women Religious of contemplative and active life, whose consecrated oblation reflects that of Mary, and becomes the basis for a selfless service that mirrors the maternal care of the whole Church, especially for the little ones, for the weak, the poor and the suffering.

I am thinking of the young people, and particularly of the seminarians: each of you has a minor seminary for candidates for the priesthood, and there are two major seminaries — the Pontifical Seminary of Alwaye and the Apostolic Seminary of Kottayam — besides the Scholasticate of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate, with two theological faculties and a third one already envisioned. In this regard it is worthwhile to call attention to the following exhortation: "The formation of future priests should be considered as one of the most important ministries in a diocese and, in some ways, the most demanding. In fact, the work of teaching unites the professor very closely to the work of Our Lord and Master, who prepared his Apostles to be witnesses of the Gospel and dispensers of the mysteries of God" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, "The Theological Formation of Future Priests", IV, 1, 3).

10. In conclusion, I present to your reflection a profound desire of my heart: You are here united with Peter "by the fellowship of fraternal charity and impelled by zeal for the universal mission entrusted to the Apostles" (*Christus Dominus*, 36). This is a propitious occasion for recalling the supreme theme of unity: fraternal unity among Bishops, unity between the different rites, unity between the Bishop and the priests, between the Bishop and Religious, between

the Bishop, priests and laity, between the poor and the well-to-do. The unity which in these days of grace you have sought in the liturgical and pastoral fields must be the first fruit of this particular experience of harmony and collaboration.

My thoughts go to the Bishops of the other rites who work in the same territory and who must be not only brothers who coexist with you but who live alongside of you in profound ecclesial communion with you and with the whole Church. My thoughts go also to the various groups and communities of separated brethren who look with sincere admiration to your bond with the Successor of Peter.

My last word is one of hope and prayer to Mary Mother of the Church. May she protect you always and through her intercession may your Eparchies continue to have a great flowering of vocations and great holiness of life. May she enable all of us to fix our gaze constantly on her Son, Jesus Christ, the great High Priest and chief Shepherd of the Church of God.

11. And now a word to the Malankar Bishops, who are associated in a fraternal way with the group of Malabar Prelates.

I wish to extend a very special greeting to you, since this year is the anniversary of an extraordinary event in your Church. You are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of that spiritual movement of which the late and esteemed Mar Ivanios was a pioneer, and which brought into full communion with Rome himself, other Prelates, and the communities which he founded: the Brothers of the Imitation of Christ and the Sisters of Bethany.

As a sign of my own sharing in this Golden Jubilee, I am happy to announce my decision to send as my Representative and as the bearer of my message Cardinal Wladislaw Rubin, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Churches, who will be present for the solemn celebrations that are scheduled for 26-28 December next.

I assure you of my prayers, my blessing and my fraternal affection in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Book Reviews

Mission

Courage Church! By Walbert BÜHLMANN, OFM Cap. *Maryknoll, Orbis Books*, 1978. Pp. 149. \$ 5.95.

The Missions on Trial. By Walbert BÜHLMANN, OFM Cap. *Maryknoll, Orbis Books*, 1979. Pp. 158. \$ 5.95.

We have reviewed formerly in this periodical (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1976, pp. 329-330) the important book of Walbert Buhlmann, *The Coming of the Third Church*, which Karl Rahner called then "the best Catholic book of the year". The book was important because it brought to the notice of the Christian world in a forceful manner the leadership role which the Church of the Third World is called to play in the future and laid down ecclesiological principles for Christian witness in a fast changing world. The two volumes under review here do not have the same ample cope but, coming from the same pen, they witness to the same vision of mission for the future.

1. *Courage Church!* offers, as the subtitle indicates, "Essays in Ecclesial Spirituality". It is nourished at the same source of Vatican II ecclesiology as was the major volume. Prolonging the conciliar doctrine and applying it, Buhlmann points to three "elements of a fresh ecclesiology": the Holy Spirit, Christ, the People of God on pilgrimage. In the Church of the future, the stress must be once again put on the local Churches, the universal Church being the communion of those Churches with the Church of Rome as centre of unity. There follow reflections on evangelisation and cultures, and on evangelisation in our present-day conflict-prone society. Mission in the future is contrasted with its past and its present. One admires here the author's sense of continuity, even while he advocates serious reforms. What is finally needed is a 'conversion' in the sense of a change of heart that helps rediscover evangelisation at its source. It is also a deeper missionary awareness among all members of the Church, priests, religious and lay, as well as a

deeper sense of the Church's insertion into the mystery of human history.

2. *The Missions on Trial* is a very exciting book. In the framework of a simulated legal court case against the missions, held in Adis Ababa in 1980, Buhlmann portrays the whole drama of Christianity in Africa. Hard accusations are made against missions and missionaries, often based on historical documents and construed on the testimony of historical figures. The defense too is straightforward and personalised, consisting of the testimonies of Catholic and Protestant missionaries who soberly, self-critically, report on their active work and life. The defence is convincing by its very sobriety, and the reader follows with growing sympathy the ecumenical documentation put before him. The verdict is that missions in the past have of course often been conditioned by the mentality of a by-gone age, but, provided they are able and willing to adapt themselves to the new age, they continue to be welcome and necessary. "A moral for the future from the archives of today"—as the subtitle of the book puts it.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

The Meaning of Mission. By Joseph COMBLIN. *Maryknoll, Orbis Books*, 1978. Pp. 142. \$ 4.95.

We have previously reviewed two books by Joseph Comblin, the well-known theologian and social critic who ranks among the early representatives of Latin American Liberation Theology (cf. VIDYAJYOTI 1980, p. 348). Here is a slim but inspiring volume on mission and its meaning.

As would be expected, Comblin starts from the mission of Jesus which he describes. He then writes: "The concept of the Gospel mission lies at the heart of the great theological problems of our day. Since Christianity is a mission, . . . it is the movement of God towards us and us towards God. It is not some part of humanity but humanity in its totality. We encounter Jesus Christ in the middle of this movement. Or, to put it more accurately, he *is* this movement" (pp. 51-52). Comblin then

moves on to consider the content and object of the Gospel mission, that is salvation. But what does salvation mean? "Salvation consists in reconstructing freedom and love in human beings" (p. 58) against all dehumanising structures. True; yet is it correct to say (p. 62) that the whole N.T. rules out the idea of a sacrifice of Christ, or even that the image of Jesus' meritorious death as 'satisfaction' is "wholly irrational" (pp. 62-63)? Next, Comblin considers the way in which the Gospel mission is carried out, that is through service, and with strength in weakness as its distinctive resource. Finally he stresses the public character of the Gospel mission which is directed simultaneously to the individual person and to society as a whole. In all of this, Comblin stresses the primary need for the Gospel mission to be alive to the present age and sensitive to the signs of the times. Pastoral and missionary activity must start from the recognition of the movements of the Spirit in history and look to the authentic fonts of Christianity for inspiration.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Debate on Mission. Edited by Herbert E. HOEFER. *Madras, Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute, 1979. Pp. xix-470. Rs 10.*

This is an important volume on the issues confronting the Christian mission in the Indian context. It gathers together 48 essays by 28 different authors, selected from various research seminars and consultations on mission conducted by the Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Madras, during the last few years. The material is so vast that the reviewer can attempt no more than a general overview.

The book is divided into three main sections. The first confronts various perspectives of the Indian mission, thereby reviewing much of the historical evolution as well as showing the progressive broadening of the concept of mission. We discover here the importance given in recent years to inter-religious dialogue, social action, inculturation, as essential dimensions of mission. We learn to reconcile on the common basis of the Gospel tendencies, like for instance evangelism and development, which only a short-sighted approach to mission would consider as contradicting each other.

The second section raises issues of baptism in the Indian context: unbaptized believers and the relationship

of the Church to them; implications of the current dialogue movement for the problem of baptism. This section is further enriched by testimonies of non-Christians who have themselves made the decision to receive baptism or have chosen to remain non-baptized believers in Christ.

The third section is devoted to questions of Church structures in the Indian mission context. This comprises studies on congregational structures as well as on ministry and ministries suited for optimum size congregations. Also considered are the educational structures required for mission.

Reading this abundant material, the Catholic reader, especially the theologian, is struck by the similarity between the problems with which his own Church is confronted in the Indian mission field and those of other Churches in the same field; no less striking are the similarity in the orientation of theological thinking between the Churches and the convergence of theological opinions on matters of evangelisation, baptism, ministry, community, etc. This convergence of course is not entirely new, but this volume is another, and an important sign that it is steadily growing. The volume contains much that is valuable in itself. But if, as we believe, common witness and action is the future of ecumenism, it has even more to recommend itself to our attention.

J. DUPUIS, S.J.

Church History

The English Catholic Community 1570-1850. By John Bossy. *London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979. Pp. xi-446. £ 5.95.*

Between the initial date of 'The Church by Law Established' and the year 1850, when the Catholic hierarchy was restored in England, nearly three hundred years elapsed. What happened during those long years to the small minority which came to be called 'Roman Catholic'?

This is the question which John Bossy tries to answer. In spite of a fair amount of literature on the topic, it remains difficult to analyse a community which, on the one hand, represented pre-Reformation Catholicism among the English, and, on the other, was characterized by a strong anti-Protestant attitude.

On the whole the author succeeds well in his enterprise. He throws much light on the life and vision of English Catholics since the Elizabethan establishment. Making use of both primary and second-

dary sources, he gives a detailed and accurate sociological analysis of the sentiments of a class, of a period, of a locality.

The book is divided into three parts. The first covers the evolution of the Catholic Community until the end of the 17th century; in the second, the most important I think, the supremacy of the Catholic gentry is studied under all its aspects down to 1770, including of course the role played by both regular and secular clergy. The last part deals with the transformation of the community into a more recognized 'denomination'.

The author shows convincingly that the Catholic community in England, though never very large, always continued growing slowly but steadily, until it registered a rapid increase in the 19th century due to the sudden influx of the impoverished Irish. His chapter six (pp. 108-148) on 'Types of Religious Behaviour' is a fascinating example of socio-religious analysis.

E. R. HAMBYE, S.J.

Catholic Missionaries in a British Colony. Successes and Failures in Ceylon 1796-1893. By Robrecht BOUDENS, O.M.I. *Immensee, Nouvelle Revue de Science Missionnaire*, 1979. Pp. 181. SF 17.80.

Catholics in Sri Lanka have often known very difficult times. After the early success of the 16th-17th centuries, they had to go through a really dark period, that of the Dutch colonialism of the 17th and 18th centuries. It was due to the unexpected arrival of the Venerable Jose Vaz and his Oratorians that Catholicism survived against incredible Dutch fanaticism. The Goa Inquisition was little, compared to the methods of the Worshipful Dutch East India Company!

Fr Boudens deals with the last part of the story, namely the hundred years since the British replaced the Dutch. Most of

the chapters of his book have already appeared in the pages of the *Journal*, under whose auspices they are now published in a volume. An impressive list of sources and an extensive bibliography show that the author has almost exhausted the material at his disposal; this is repeatedly confirmed by the numerous footnotes.

The book has really two parts. The introduction and the first three chapters deal with the background and early developments under the British rule, until about 1849. The second part proceeds to the coming of the 'Roman' (instead of the 'Padroado') missionaries, the O.M.I.'s, who with the Silvestrine Benedictines and the secular clergy transformed the situation rather quickly. This is the period of the apostolic vicariates paving the way for the official hierarchy in 1887.

As the author himself writes at the end of his conclusion, his book may appear too much as a history of institutions, due to the nature of his documentation. His treatment is also limited to the staff and personnel of the missions in Sri Lanka, as the title itself indicates. We learn very little about the Singhalese and Tamil communities themselves.

While dealing with the clergy from Goa, the author generally takes the 'Propaganda' viewpoint. Sometimes, it looks as if Rome was only too happy to win the final victory against the Padroado, without minding the consequences. I personally believe that the conflict Padroado-Propaganda was not a schism (the author could have avoided the word throughout), but a clash between Asian — in this case, mostly Indian — and foreign clergy. Regarding the schismatic efforts of the Goan priest A. F. X. Alvares, Boudens could have consulted the excellent chapter devoted to him by P. F. Anson, in his book *Bishops at Large* (London, 1964).

E. R. HAMBYE, S.J.

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